

Letter from Delhi
ubedar Ali foue
an-eating tiger

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THE TIMES

No 62,018

FRIDAY DECEMBER 21 1984

20p

THE TIMES Tomorrow

Christmas teasers
Be a winner with
the Prize Jumbo
Crossword and
The Times quiz

JUMBO

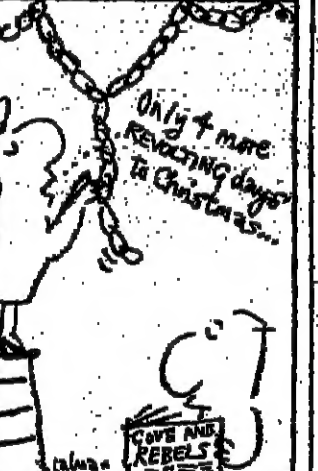
See it all
Your complete guide
to seven days of
TV films for the
holiday
What a show!
A critical eye on
the Christmas
productions
and pantomimes
Self-destruction
Julian Haviland asks
if the Tories will
continue to shoot
themselves in the foot

Portfolio

The Times Portfolio competition prize of £2,000 was shared by three winners yesterday. Mr Benjamin Plant, of Taverham, Norfolk, Mr Roger Palmer, of Haverhill, Kent, and Mrs Christine Bailey of Cobham, Surrey, each received £666.66. Portfolio list, page 20; how to play, information service, back page.

56 patients in peril from Aids

Forty-one people in England and Wales and 15 in Scotland have been exposed to the danger of contracting the fatal disease Aids, through blood transfusions from two different sources. A baby was born with Aids antibodies in his system after the mother received an infected transfusion. Page 3



Sterling falls to \$1.1663

The pound had another weak day on the foreign exchanges, dropping 77 points against the dollar to a new low of \$1.1663. The sterling index, which measures the pound's average value, fell 0.3 to 73.0, its lowest level. Sterling's weakness resulted mainly from oil price uncertainties. Page 17

Belgrano killing

The Home Office is investigating a Labour MP's allegation that British intelligence officers murdered a woman while searching for documents concerning the sinking of the General Belgrano. Page 2

Libya prisoners

As the Foreign Office awaited further news of an Englishwoman held in Libya for 14 months, an English teacher made his second court appearance in Tripoli. Page 6

Opec delay

The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries has shelved any decision on a new oil pricing structure and a code for its members until December 27. Earlier report, page 17

Leader page, 15.
Letters: On drugs, from Mr M Sutton, and others; land reclamation, from Mr D E Randall.
Leading articles: Mrs Thatcher's Year; The Economy; the Gillick case.
Features, pages 12-14.
Anita Desai on the Sikh-Hindu rift; Tony Harrison, a voice for the inarticulate; David Watt on arms complexities.
Spectrum: the black market in Ming and Tang.
Friday Page: in praise of godparents.
Classified advertising, pages 24-26.
Business to Business, page 24.
Car Buyers' Guide, page 25.
Obituary, page 16.
Lord St Oswald, Mr John Wilmer, QC, Dr Frank Wild.

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Civil Aviation Bill shelved until Stansted decision

By Julian Haviland, Political Editor

The Government yesterday abandoned its Civil Aviation Bill in the face of insuperable pressure from opponents in its own as well as in Opposition ranks.

Mr Nicholas Ridley, Secretary of State for Transport, said in the Commons that since MPs on the Bill's standing committee had twice prevented it from being discussed, the Government proposed that further consideration of it should be postponed until ministers had taken a decision on the proposed expansion of Stansted airport in Essex.

But few MPs yesterday expected the Bill to return in its present form, unless the Government were to accept without qualification the planning inspector's proposal that Stansted should be developed to handle 15 million passengers a year as soon as possible. This possibility is seen at Westminster as growing steadily more remote.

Mr Peter Snape, chief Labour spokesman on transport, said that the decision was a unique humiliation for Mr Ridley which, with a little common-sense, would not have occurred.

The Civil Aviation Bill has no formal connection with the Stansted report, as Mr Ridley and his colleagues have maintained. But it provides, among

other things, powers for the minister to put a limit on the number of flights at London's main airport, Heathrow, and other airports owned by the British Airports Authority.

Mr Ridley's opponents have argued that the Bill, if passed, would preempt the decision on Stansted which ministers expect to make in the late spring or early summer.

Ministers reflected yesterday that the autumn sitting of Parliament, which ends today, has been dismal for them.

In addition to Mr Patrick Jenkin's torment this week in two appearances in the Commons to defend the cuts in local authority expenditure, there has been Sir Keith Joseph's defeat by the sheer weight of Conservative hostility on the question of student grants, and yesterday the frustration of Mr Ridley by an alliance of members on either side of the House.

Mr Ridley's manner of conceding defeat was such as to lose him support even among those who approved of his decision.

Mr John Wilkinson, Conservative MP for Ruislip, Northwood, and chairman of the backbench aviation committee, said that it would have been better if Mr Ridley had said unequivocally that he was

withdrawing the Bill in its entirety.

Mr Alan Haselhurst, Conservative MP for Saffron Walden, who is a leader in the campaign to prevent large-scale expansion at Stansted, said that Mr Ridley's persistent statements that there was no connection between the Bill and the decision on airports policy was bound to exasperate his colleagues.

Mr Ridley had expected the anger of MPs representing constituencies near Heathrow where residents fear increased noise from its unlimited expansion. Sir Humphrey Atkins, Conservative member for Spelthorpe, said that millions of Londoners were looking for the minister to honour the Government's promise to limit development.

Mr Toby Jessel, Conservative MP for Twickenham, made the same point. Mr Ridley replied that it was not his fault, but the fault of those who had frustrated the Bill's progress in committee.

The Government yesterday gave the go-ahead for new capital projects at 11 council-controlled regional airports in England and Wales. They include a helicopter terminal at Humberside airport and a runway extension at Cardiff.

Parliament, page 4

Heseltine facing inquiry on Levene

By Philip Webster, Political Reporter

Mr Michael Heseltine, the Secretary of State for Defence, and Mr Peter Levene, his new Chief of Defence Procurement, are likely to be summoned before a senior Commons committee in the new year amid all-party disquiet over Mr Levene's controversial £95,000 a year appointment.

This emerged at Westminster last night after a Commons row over Mr Levene and his replacement as head of United Scientific Holdings, a big defence contractor, by Sir Frank Cooper, former Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Defence, during which Mr Neil Kinnock remarked: "The whole appointment and everything connected with it stinks."

The Commons Select Committee on Defence earlier this year investigated Mr Heseltine's reorganisations plans. Member said last night that they had been given no inkling of the impending appointment of Mr Levene or the creation of a new post of Chief of Defence Equipment Collaboration, for the man he replaces, Mr David Perry.

Committee members are bound to raise other issues that continued to worry MPs of all parties yesterday, including the effect on civil service morale of the appointment, Mr Levene's high salary and fears of conflict of interest in the appointment of Sir Frank Cooper.

During furious exchanges with Mr John Biffen, the Commons leader, who was standing in for the Prime Minister, Mr Levene said: "I am not a politician. I am a professional."

Thatcher assures Hong Kong people

From David Bonavia, Hong Kong

Mrs Margaret Thatcher said last night that reaction in Hong Kong to the Sino-British agreement on the territory's reversion to China seemed to be "good, very good".

At a reception for some 500 leading citizens at Government House, she told me: "I think how it would have been if we had not started this process two years ago. It would have been very difficult now."

In an address to an unprecedented joint session of the Executive and Legislative Councils, the Prime Minister said: "We have over 12 years to prepare together for the changes which lie ahead. I believe that you will rise to the challenge."

She arrived yesterday from Peking, where she signed the agreement under which Hong Kong will revert to Chinese sovereignty as a special administrative region in 1997. Today she will hold a press conference before leaving for the United States.

The Hong Kong public reacted with calm to the signing of the agreement, having known for several months what it would contain. It allows for the territory to retain its capitalist system and British-style laws for fifty years after 1997.

Miners in Notts vote out rule

By Craig Seaton

Nottinghamshire miners' leaders yesterday inflicted a crucial blow to the National Union of Mineworkers by voting through rule changes which will protect the area from the authority and discipline of the national body.

The "separatist" move by the Nottinghamshire Area Council of the NUM was the outcome of 10 months of bitter division between the moderate, working-class and the left-dominated national executive. It went ahead less than 24 hours after the national union failed to gain a temporary High Court injunction to stop the change. Its legality will be tested at a full hearing next year.

Mr Ray Chaddburn, the Nottinghamshire NUM president, denied yesterday that the area had set up an independent, breakaway union, but conceded that the national executive would react with "utmost concern". He said: "It is of paramount importance that I prevent, at all costs, any breakaway in Nottinghamshire."

The area council meeting of mandated delegates in Mansfield agreed by 27 votes to 4 to remove Rule 30 which states that where there are conflicts between national and area rules the national executive shall apply. It becomes effective on January 1.

Moderate officials in Nottinghamshire, where most miners have defied the strike, were convinced that the change was essential to protect the area from the "star chamber" discipline the national executive was preparing for those who broke ranks during the strike. Nottinghamshire miners voted overwhelmingly for the rule change in pithead ballots.

Continued on back page, col 5

'Best possible Christmas present'



Mrs Gillick: A victory smile outside the Law Courts. Photograph: John Manning

Appeal Court win for mother in pill battle

By Nicholas Timmins, Social Services Correspondent

Doctors were yesterday barred by the Court of Appeal from prescribing contraceptives to girls under 16 without their parents' consent.

In a unanimous judgment, the court ruled that Department of Health guidance to doctors that exceptional cases they can prescribe the pill without consulting the girl's parents, was unlawful.

And in a decision that represents at least a temporary victory for the six-year campaign by Mrs Victoria Gillick, the Roman Catholic mother of 10 from Wisbech in Cambridgeshire, for parents to have the absolute right to be consulted, the court granted that none of her children be given any contraceptive, abortion advice or treatment without her consent, save in an emergency or after a court order.

Mrs Gillick yesterday greeted the judgment as "the best Christmas present for millions of families there could possibly have been". But the Department of Health, which was granted leave to appeal, is thought likely to take the case to the House of Lords. Ministers expected to make a statement to Parliament today, and the department said it was considering whether it now had to withdraw its guidance.

Family planning and children's organizations yesterday gave a warning that unless the judgment was reversed there would be more unwanted teenage pregnancies and abortions.

The British Medical Association said: "We think parents are less likely, not more likely, to find out about early sexual activity because girls simply won't go to their doctors and there will be no-one responsible trying to get the parents involved." Under-age sex would not stop because of the ruling and the association feared an increase in unwanted pregnancies.

The BMA said it was taking urgent legal advice to discover whether doctors already providing contraceptives to under-age girls had now to tell their parents, or could wait on the department's decision on an appeal.

The Children's Legal Centre said the judgment removed young people's right to consent to treatment, and denied them a confidential relationship with their doctor. "Young people may well no longer dare to consult a doctor when they need one". A jubilant Mrs Gillick, however, said the judgment was "almost too good to be true. It is a real shot in the arm for all those parents who thought what was happening was wrong."

Law Report
Leading article
15

Doctors have done an awful lot of damage to families and the health of young girls. I just hope the BMA will now work with parents to look after their children properly, rather than work against them.

She did not believe the ruling would mean more unwanted pregnancies. "Unwanted pregnancies occur when children try to look after themselves". She believed most doctors would "heave a huge sigh of relief" that the General Medical Council's ruling that doctors could face disciplinary action if they broke confidentiality and told a girl's parents against her wishes, now appeared to be "more or less null and void".

Giving judgement, Lord Justice Parker said people could hold strong and sincere views about whether doctors should prescribe contraceptives to children under 16 without the parents' knowledge. But the appeal was concerned only with the legal position.

In law, he said, a girl under 16 could give no valid consent. Mr Michael Meacher, Labour's chief social services spokesman, last night called on the Government to legislate to override the court's decision.

Gorbachev offers Britain big trade opportunities

British trade specialists were yesterday feeling particularly buoyant at the prospect of vastly increased business with the Soviet Union, after a speech in London by Mr Mikhail Gorbachev, the leader of the Soviet delegation to Britain.

Lord Jellicoe, chairman of the British Overseas Trade Board, said afterwards: "The climate for Soviet-UK trade is better now than for a very long time."

Mr Gorbachev told businessmen and bankers that he and Mrs Thatcher had assessed the likely increase in business in the near future as being between 40 and 50 per cent.

He charted the decline of British sales to his country, from a time when Britain had been the principal western supplier. After mentioning bids that were being drawn up by large corporations, such as John Brown Engineering, Davy McKee and ICI, in chemicals and agriculture, he added that there would now be "great opportunities not only for large but small and medium-sized British companies".

Gorbachev's day, page 6

Chinese art treasures flood West

By Geraldine Norman, Sale Room Correspondent

Art treasures smuggled out of China are flooding the Western art market. Prices plummeted in many areas at Christie's and Sotheby's London sales last week and dealers report that they can find buyers only for extreme rarities.

Since the Communists gained control in 1949 there has been only a trickle of minor antiquities out of China through government-controlled channels. Now ceramics and bronzes from newly discovered burial sites are flowing out of China -

officially - on a massive scale.

Small scale smuggling is said to have begun about four years ago through Macao to Hong Kong, and most of the material was quickly absorbed by Hong Kong's busy antiques trade.

A pot can be bought in China for \$10, the average monthly wage, and sold in the West for up to \$400,000.

This autumn the flow of material has turned into a flood. Roughly half the lots in Christie's December auctions in New York and London were left unsold.

The material flowing out of China is mostly repetitive and not of great quality, and prices in many fields have dropped to around 20 per cent of levels five years ago.

The black glazed bottles made at Henan during the Song dynasty (960-1271 A.D.) lightly decorated with leaf sprays, used to fetch £15,000 or more. There were five at Christie's last week with a top price of £4,752 and two unsold at £1,200.

Spectrum, Page 12

Dust and adrenalin on Gandhi campaign trail

From Trevor Fishlock, Amethi, Uttar Pradesh
"Come on", Mr Gandhi says. "Let's go for a cup of tea."

He strides smartly off the road and heads for the village tea stall, piled-piping a cheering, jostling, excited crowd. It has been like this, in village after village, all the way across the dusty plain. "Mr Gandhi is having the time of his life, riding the Rajiv wave."

Though short of sleep after so many 2 am rallies, he is bright-eyed and in good humour, living on adrenalin, confident of overwhelming victory and a solid mandate for change.

The tea stall man pours tea into little red clay cups. Mr Gandhi holds informal court in a space in the crowd. "Here", he says, handing me a cup, "have some tea." Everyone needs plenty of tea to wash down the dust, for Mr Gandhi's princely progress through his sprawling constituency is gritty and gruelling work.

No sauntering. He marches through villages at a determined light-footed pace, and enthusiastic people trot and run behind him, kicking up a plume of dust that rises like smoke from a signal fire. Men cheer and boys shout. Women look at the handsome leader, and grey grandfathers, resting on their sticks, nod

their heads as another Nehru passes. Scampering dogs join in the fun, goats scatter and camels look round to see what all the fuss is about.

Mr Gandhi has a winner's demeanour. He is dressed in white tunic and trousers, a blue-edged scarf around his neck, sandals on his feet. His eyes, which can have a reflective and brooding quality, are now shining and excited, his security men are watchful, but he is remarkably accessible and answers questions from reporters who fall in step with him at the head of the crowd.

People press letters and petitions on him and he talks to everyone who engages him. This is one of the ways in which India works. Access is vital, and people need to feel that they can get close to their leaders.

Yes, he says to questioners, bringing peace to the troubled state of Punjab is a priority. He looks forward to making a Punjab initiative after the election. Yes, non-alignment will remain a foreign policy keystone.

He feels he is winning the election because "We are giving hope to the people". He gives a broad smile when someone asks if he consulted an astrologer and says a firm no. Does he feel elated? He pounces on the word. "Yes", he says, "elated".

Continued on back page, col 1

A
GENTLEMAN'S
AFTER
SHAVE
CHANEL

Un splash de rigueur

CHANEL
FOR GENTLEMEN

Home Office to investigate Dalyell's murder claim over Belgrano documents

By Michael Horsnell

Allegations that an elderly woman was murdered by British intelligence officers whom she caught searching her home for sensitive documents on the sinking of the Argentine Cruiser, General Belgrano, are to be examined by the Home Office.

The startling claim was made early yesterday in the Commons by Mr Tom Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow, who has unremittingly questioned the Government about the sinking.

The body of the woman, Miss Hilma Murrell, aged 78, an international rose expert, was found three days after she died in March, about six miles from her home in Shrewsbury.

There were signs of a break-in and struggle at the house where Mr Dalyell said, intelligence officers may have believed Miss Murrell kept documents about the Belgrano affair deposited with her by her nephew Commander Rob Green, who had held a key position in naval intelligence during the Falklands War and passed the signal ordering the sinking.

Commander Green, who thought the war unnecessary and has since left the Navy, was not available at his home in Dorset to comment on the Dalyell allegations, though it is understood that he did not deposit documents with his aunt.

West Mercia police said yesterday that there was no evidence to support the allegations and the Shrewsbury coroner, Colonel David Crawford-Clarke, who recorded a verdict of unlawful killing, described them as "utter rubbish".

Mr Giles Shaw, Minister of State at the Home Office, said yesterday that Mr Dalyell's claims, made as MPs sat all night debating the Consolidated Fund Bill, a technical measure which allows them to raise almost any topic, would be given full consideration.

Mr Dalyell told *The Times* that although he was satisfied with this undertaking he ultimately wanted a select committee of privy councillors to consider the operation of the security services.

Mr Dalyell, who refused to disclose his sources, said last night: "Before the police or the coroner issued their denials they should have read my speech in Hansard."

He added: "I do not wish to advance any theory why Miss Murrell's body was found six miles from her home. Nor does it make any difference that Commander Green did not lodge any documents with her it was believed that she had when her home was broken into. The circumstances of Miss Murrell's death have not been explained. Mr Dalyell said he was given to understand that there was no premeditated intention to kill

New guidelines for Special Branch

By Richard Evans, Lobby Reporter

The Home Office yesterday published new guidelines on the work of the Special Branch, which have been issued to police forces throughout England and Wales.

Until now Special Branch activities, which include the gathering of political intelligence and helping to combat terrorism, espionage and subversion, have been subject to controversially secret guidance prepared by police chiefs in 1970.

The publication of the guidelines, which have taken a year to prepare, coincides with the investigation of the Special Branch by the Commons home affairs select committee.

Apart from detailing the Special Branch's functions, the new guidelines cover records kept on individual people and say it is important that only information relevant to the branches' specific work is recorded.

"Data on individuals or organizations should not be collected or held solely on the basis that such a person or organization supports unpopular causes or on the basis of race or creed."

Information on individuals should, where possible, be authenticated and "not give a false or misleading impression".

The guidelines add: "Access to information held by Special Branch should be strictly limited to those who have a particular need to know. Under no circumstances should information be passed to commercial firms or to employers' organizations."

But last night Mr David Winnick, Labour MP for Walsall, North, and a leading member of the select committee investigating the Special Branch, criticized the guidelines for giving too much discretion to the police.

"I and my Labour colleagues are pleased these guidelines have been published, but they provide room for a whole range of questions which are of important public interest."

He said the Special Branch was given too much discretion about what constituted a threat to public order, and he was not certain why it should be involved in the area of naturalization and immigration.

Mr Leon Brittan, the Home Secretary, will be questioned on the guidelines when he appears before the select committee in the new year. Meanwhile, Labour MPs on the committee are likely to press for the inquiry to be extended.

Councillor's law-defying timetable

By Our Local Government Correspondent

Mr John McDonnell, deputy leader of the Greater London Council, yesterday became the first prominent Labour councillor to set a clear timetable for breaking the law next year in defiance of Government policy.

Many other councillors have said that the law may be broken next year when the Labour movement pursues its policy of "non-compliance" with rate-capping. But Mr McDonnell made it clear in an article in *Tribune* yesterday, that he did not want his council to fix the rate by the March deadline, when it will be required to do so by law. No such deadline applies to most of the 15 other Labour-led authorities chosen for rate-capping next year.

● The Labour-led Association of Metropolitan Authorities gave warning yesterday that the latest government housing cuts might make it impossible for councils to fulfil their new legal obligation to buy back former council homes bought by their tenants, and now officially recognized as defective.

Kinnock's bad year according to poll

By Our Lobby Reporter

The year 1984 has been a grim one for Mr Neil Kinnock, the Labour leader, and 1985 looks like being even worse for his party, according to an opinion poll published last night.

Fewer than 25 per cent of those interviewed think that the Labour leader has had a "good year", while two-thirds positively believe the opposite. The poll, conducted for *Central Lobby*, Central Television's weekly political programme, places Mr Kinnock firmly in fourth place behind his party rivals, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, Dr David Owen and Mr David Steel.

Even more ominous for Mr Kinnock is the belief that Labour will fall behind the Alliance and be the least successful party in 1985, while the Conservatives rear ahead. And that despite the poll showing 69 per cent of those interviewed expect unemployment to rise in the next 12 months.

In contrast, Mrs Thatcher's performance continues to be highly regarded, with half the poll sample believing she has had a good 1984. Dr Owen and

Firecracker may re-bid on RAF deal

By Rodney Cowton, Defence Correspondent

The only British-designed aircraft among four which are competing to become the next basic trainer for the Royal Air Force is likely to submit a revised bid, even though it appeared to have been eliminated by the Ministry of Defence.

On Tuesday, Mr Adam Butler, Minister of State for Defence Procurement, announced that two of the contenders for the £200 million contract had been invited to submit "best and final" offers. They are British Aerospace, with the Swift Platons PC9 and Shorts of Belfast, with the Brazilian Embraer Tucano.

However, it emerged yesterday that although the other two contenders had not been invited



Games galore: Mr Hall working on a car repair.

Miner repairs toys for parties

By Peter Davenport

Of all efforts being made to ensure the best possible Christmas for the children of striking miners, few can equal the dedication of Mr Tom Hall's contribution.

For six hours a day, four days a week for months past he has been working with a soldering iron, miniature tools and paint pots repairing, repainting and cleaning hundreds of second-hand toys collected by a women's action group in the pit village of Bentley, near Doncaster, in the Yorkshire coalfield.

The living room of his home in Sprotborough Road, Doncaster, has been transformed into a "Santa's grotto" as the toys and games pile up.

They have been wrapped for distribution at a Christmas party tomorrow for up to 400 children at a park pavilion used as a meal kitchen for striking miners and their families in Bentley. More of Mr Hall's handiwork will go to other parties in the area.

Mr Hall, aged 50, a miner at Bentley colliery for 22 years, has been on strike throughout the dispute. Recently he had to have the little finger of his right hand amputated as a result of an accident at work and it made the delicate job of repairing the damaged toys much harder.

He helps out at the food kitchen and was there one day when two damaged games were handed in for miners' children.

"Someone mentioned that I used to be good at repairing toys and games for my own children and I volunteered to do them. It sort of snowballed from there and there were so many in the end that I couldn't move in my living room."

"My satisfaction will come when I watch the children's faces as they open their presents and see the toys. That will make it all worthwhile," Mr Hall said.

Clergy unites to aid families

By Paul Valleley

Even before the Bishop of Durham gave his controversial enthronement sermon on the miners' strike, the Anglican clergy in his diocese had taken a more active role in the dispute than their brethren in other parts of the country.

As the second most important festival in the church's calendar approaches, that involvement has accelerated considerably.

Clerical attitudes to the dispute are far from homogeneous. The vicar of Eppleton, the Rev John Stephenson, with his "Coal not dole," stickers and GND badges on his ankle-length cassock, has declared his church a nuclear-free zone and rails against the "lack of compassion of this woman who came into office with the prayer of St Francis on her lips."

His near neighbour, the Rev Brian Pateman, vicar of Mutton, on the other hand, condemns the strike as "unnecessary" and has told his striking parishioners that they should get back to work immediately. In the vicarages of Durham there are all shades of opinion between.

What most of the area's ministers share, however, is a commitment to practical aid to strikers and their families who are in hardship. In private, local officials of the National Coal Board regard the commitment on the grounds that it can only prolong a strike which many of the clerics now consider the

Showpiece pit cuts coal again

National Coal Board officials held a press conference yesterday to announce production of coal for the first time in 10 months at their showpiece pit.

Wistow mine, part of the £1 billion Selby complex, began producing on Wednesday, the third pit in the Yorkshire coalfield to cut coal since the dispute started. The 105 men working comprise only 15 per cent of the total workforce, and they are producing about 150 tonnes of coal a day.

Officials said that they were confident production would increase substantially in the new year, when they expect many more NUM members to return.

Statistics show that just over 3,000 NUM members, out of a total workforce of 50,000, are working in the Yorkshire coalfield, and producing about 5,000 tonnes a week.

Nationally, the NCB say that 69,000 NUM members are working - 37 per cent of the total union membership - and coal is being produced at 66 collieries. Only 26 of the country's 174 pits have 100 per cent strike support.

Coal production is rising slowly and is presently running at 600,000 tonnes a week.

● David Hamilton, aged 34, a NUM delegate, was yesterday cleared at Edinburgh Sheriff Court of attacking a working miner, after he said he acted in self-defence.

Finance and Industry, page 17

Ship almost delivered on time

By Edward Townsend

Industrial Correspondent

The replacement for the Atlantic Conveyor, the container ship sunk during the Falklands war, began its sea trials last night and will be handed over to the owners, Cunard, after Christmas, only a few days after the amended delivery date.

At a press conference preceding the trials, however, Mr Bill Slater, chairman of Cunard Shipping Services, said that if it had not been for the public outcry and government intervention when the order was placed, in the summer of 1982, the company would have gone to a Far East yard and would have had the ship a year earlier.

After the personal intervention of Mrs Thatcher, Cunard gave the £50 million contract to the state-owned Swan Hunter yard on Tyne. The new ship, twice as big as its predecessor, has provided almost two years' work for 1,000 Mr Slater said that Cunard was satisfied with the quality of the new ship. Swan Hunter was improving its productivity all the time as a result of new



Atlantic Conveyor about to cast off for her sea trials.

working methods and he believed that within the next two years the yard might have narrowed the gap with its Far East rivals.

A new delivery date for the Atlantic Conveyor of December 21 was fixed more than a year ago, after discussions with

Spending in 4 health regions to be reduced

By Nicholas Timmins
Social Services
Correspondent

Health authorities in England are to receive an extra £530 million next year that will provide growth in real terms for 10 of the 14 regions, but reductions in spending of up to 0.3 per cent in real terms for the four Thames regions.

Overall the national budget will rise by 5.5 per cent in cash terms, ranging from 6.8 per cent in the Trent region to 4.2 per cent in two of the four Thames regions.

Health authorities have already been warned, however, that they will have to fund any pay increases above the Government's 3 per cent limit from the allocations announced yesterday.

Mr Norman Fowler, Secretary of State for Social Services, said that the increases would vary "because we are continuing the policy of redistributing resources between different parts of the country."

"As a result I have been able to give bigger revenue increases to regions which are relatively deprived or which have rapidly growing populations."

In addition, he said, cost improvement programmes were now showing "substantial" benefits and the Government was expecting the new general managers to "extend and develop them rigorously next year. As a result authorities should be able to develop services faster than the cash growth figures imply."

Extra money for capital spending should come from sales of surplus land and residential accommodation which health authorities have been asked to identify.

Health ministers also announced yesterday that authorities are being asked to set a target of treating at least 40 new kidney patients per million population by 1987. In 1982, 1,846 new patients were treated - a rate of 33 per million population.

Mr John Parson, Parliamentary Secretary for Health, said that the preferred method of treatment was transplantation, and after the launch of a kidney donor campaign in February the number of transplants had risen by 40 per cent in six months.

HEALTH SPENDING IN ENGLAND 1985/86

Region	Revenue increase (%)	Capital share (%)
Northern	5.8	34.5
Yorkshire	5.5	47.8
Trent	5.5	51.2
East Anglia	5.3	32.5
NW Thames	4.2	34.1
NE Thames	4.2	39.8
SE Thames	4.4	40.5
SW Thames	4.2	51.1
Wessex	4.7	48.7
Oxford	5.3	23.1
S Western	5.3	44.5
W Midlands	5.4	72.3
Mersey	4.9	28.5
N Western	5.5	61.7
Average	5.5	57.6

Appeal ruled out for mother who killed son

A mother jailed for the murder of her 14-year-old son is to continue serving a life sentence after a Home Office decision that there are no new grounds for an appeal against her conviction.

An investigation into the murder, which occurred in 1979, was ordered after a BBC TV programme "Rough Justice" claimed that Mrs Margaret Livesey, aged 48, did not have time to commit the killing.

But after the six-month inquiry which looked again at the evidence and re-interviewed witnesses Mr David Mellor, a junior Home Office Minister, yesterday announced that there were no grounds for referral to the Court of Appeal. "If any other evidence comes to light it will be investigated," a Home Office spokesman said.

Radar spy system may be based in Britain

By Our Defence Correspondent

A long-range radar system, which can see over the horizon and greatly improve surveillance of the strategically important waters of Norway, could be based in Britain.

Scientists from Britain and the United States have worked for some years on the project, code-named "Cold Witness". In March, *The Times* reported the finding at Heathrow airport of a list of names and addresses of people involved in the highly confidential project, which had been accidentally left in a telephone kiosk.

The Ministry of Defence has so far refused to discuss the project, but after a question was tabled in Parliament earlier this month, Mr Adam Butler, Minister of State for Defence Procurement, is expected to give a written reply.

An effective long-range radar system would probably be operated by bouncing radar. Britain is understood to be under consideration as a site for the system which could greatly improve the surveillance of the important sea-passages between Greenland and the Faeroe islands, and areas around the Kola Peninsula where some of the USSR's most important bases are located.

Tribunal for police chief

The suspended Derbyshire Chief Constable, Mr Alf Parrish, will face charges under police disciplinary regulations before a private, independent tribunal, probably in February or March.

Mr Parrish, aged 54, was suspended on full pay in June after it was alleged that he spent £28,000 on his office suite without authorization.

The London solicitors Titmuss, Sainer and Webb, appointed by the Derbyshire police authority to present the allegations at the tribunal, said yesterday that no details of the charges, or how many there were, could be given.

The tribunal will comprise Mr Arthur Milson, QC, and two assessors, the former Chief Constable of Surrey, Sir Peter Matthews, and the former chief executive of Lincolnshire County Council, Mr G. R. Prentice.

GLC snubs Government move to veto lorry ban

By Hugh Clayton

The Greater London Council yesterday brushed aside a government threat to veto its plan to ban lorries from most roads in the capital at night and weekends.

The Labour-led council's transport committee voted by 12 to six to go ahead with the ban next June, even if the Government held a public inquiry into the scheme.

In a letter to Mr Nicholas Ridley, Secretary of State for Transport, the committee said it would not accept as lawful any government attempt to block the ban during the inquiry. The legal argument centres around the council's statutory obligation to ensure the speedy and safe movement of traffic.

Mr Ridley told the council last week it had not given satisfactory answers to the people who sent 3,600 letters opposing the ban and had not published enough about its costs and benefits.

The council retorted yesterday that it could produce a pile of published documents more than four feet high for Mr Ridley to study. It refused to hold a public inquiry itself, but accepted that it could not prevent the Government from holding one.

Women refused cheaper loans

The Northern Bank, the Midland Bank subsidiary in Ulster, has been discriminating unlawfully between male and female employees when granting cheap mortgages and low interest loans.

The Equal Opportunities Commission for Northern Ireland has sustained complaints that favourable loans at below market rates were refused to married women employees, but normally granted to married men.

Tebbit visits staff party

Mr Norman Tebbit, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry paid an unexpected visit to his department in London yesterday and exchanged gifts with his staff at a Christmas party.

Mr Tebbit, aged 53, who was badly injured in the Brighton bomb explosion, was said by a department spokesman, to be "in cracking form."

Unions merge

The 7,500-strong Association of Patternmakers and Allied Craftsmen officially merged with AUEW/Tass, the engineering union's white collar sector, yesterday. The association will keep its identity and will be known as the Craft (Patternmakers) section of Tass.

Legion disease

Two cases of Legionnaire's Disease were yesterday confirmed in Lancashire. A Cambslang man in his 50s is in the intensive care unit at Hairmyres Hospital, East Kilbride. A 45-year-old Carlisle man is in a "comfortable" condition in Law Hospital.

£480,000 haul

Two armed raiders escaped with £480,000 in cash yesterday when they attacked a security van laden with Christmas pay packets, in Oldham, Greater Manchester.

Correction

The baked beans factory at North Walsham, Norfolk, mentioned yesterday, is that of HP, not Heinz as stated.

The Times overseas selling prices: Australia 80p; Belgium 80p; Canada 80p; France 80p; Germany 80p; Hong Kong 80p; India 80p; Japan 80p; New Zealand 80p; Norway 80p; South Africa 80p; Sweden 80p; Switzerland 80p; Taiwan 80p; Thailand 80p; USA 80p; West Germany 80p.

56 exposed to Aids after getting transfusions of contaminated blood

Forty-one people in England and Wales are having medical check-ups after receiving blood products from an Aids (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) sufferer whose blood infected a baby, it was disclosed yesterday.

Fifteen Scottish haemophiliac patients are also being examined after exposure to the virus which can cause Aids. They received blood transfusions from a different source.

There has been a renewed plea from Dr Donald Acheson, chief medical officer at the Department of Health, the Scottish Blood Transfusion Service and Dr Richard Tedder, a leading Aids researcher at the Middlesex Hospital, London, for those people who run the highest risk of harbouring the virus not to give blood.

Such people include homosexuals, drug abusers and the sexual partners of either. Dr Tedder said that Aids should not be regarded as a "gay" disease, because it could now affect the whole community.

Dr Acheson said last night: "I should like to stress that anyone who is advised to have a blood transfusion or has been given a

blood transfusion should not worry, because the risk of getting contaminated blood is extremely small."

Even if a person had an antibody screening test which proved positive it did not mean that he or she would develop Aids, he said.

Dr Tedder is urgently working on a screening method, which should be widely available within six months, where by blood transfusion centres will be able to detect signs of the virus in blood donations. If all 2.5 million donations made each year were screened, it would greatly reduce the risk of the virus being passed on.

A baby in Birmingham was born prematurely with the Aids antibodies in its system. Its mother had received an infected blood transfusion during pregnancy.

A man, aged 78, who is terminally ill with cancer, and another man in his early forties, both from Portsmouth, also have the Aids antibodies after receiving blood from the same batch.

The Department of Health and Social Security said that all those exposed to Aids run some

risk of getting the disease. So far it is not known whether they have the antibodies because they have been fighting the virus which can lead to Aids, or because they have picked up the donor's own antibodies.

The donor, a man who lives in Portsmouth, gave blood at a hospital in October and was later diagnosed as having Aids. Health officials traced all recipients of his blood and, using Dr Tedder's new screening method, identified the antibodies in the patient who had had the transfusions.

They have also traced 38 haemophiliacs in Wessex and Wales who have been injected with Factor 8, the blood-clotting agent, which contained blood from the same donor. None of them has shown any signs of having clinical Aids. Health officials in Leeds and Birmingham, where the man previously gave blood, have been notified.

The cases in Scotland, which are not connected with the others, are surprising because Scotland, unlike the rest of the United Kingdom, is almost entirely self-sufficient in the production of Factor 8

Cake winner: A Christmas cake in the guise of King Kong won first prize of £100 for Mrs Linda Dainty, in the Royal Institute of British Architects' Journal competition yesterday (Charles Kneivitt, our Architecture Correspondent writes).

Among the entries, which numbered more than 50, was this (above) by Miss A. Waterston, of Little Thakeham, Storrington, West Sussex, a

culinary version of her own house, being judged by Mrs José Manser, wife of Mr Michael Manser, RIBA president.

The Royal Pavilion, Brighton, by Miss Gabrielle Lane, was second, winning £50, and runners-up were the Beachy Head Lighthouse, and a riverside house at Crown Reach, London.

Miss Lucy Adden, aged seven, won

the £20 children's prize with her entry, a chocolate button roof with Father Christmas disappearing down the chimney.

Other entries in the annual Christmas cake decorating competition, included the Leaning Tower of Pisa, a Kent oasthouse, a detail of Sir Edwin Lutyens' Viceroy's Court at New Delhi, and the penguin pool at London Zoo. (Photograph: John Voos).

Christmas sales pick up after slow start

By Derek Harris
Commercial Editor

Christmas sales will be higher than last year, despite a slight slowdown in the rate of increase in retail spending. This is the key conclusion of the latest Confederation of British Industry and Financial Times Distributive Trades Survey, held between November 20 and December 12.

The prediction was made despite a slow sales start. Christmas selling only began to pick up on the first Saturday in December. Reports from the high street shops now indicate Christmas selling is in full swing.

The sales pattern looks like a carbon copy of 1979, when Christmas sales also fell on a Tuesday. There was a slow start then but final sales totals were good.

Mr John Salisse, chairman of the CBI's survey panel, said: "Retailers are still experiencing sales increases, although the rise has fallen off slightly since the autumn. The grocery sector is doing particularly well, especially wines. The mild weather has reduced sales of winter clothing in November."

The improving sales pattern is leading to more jobs. Both retailers and wholesalers reported rises in both full-time and part-time jobs.

Increased investment in shopping facilities was expected in most sectors, particularly among large chain stores the survey said. The notable exceptions are the small independent shops which expect investment to decline.

However, the survey shows imported goods are taking a bigger share of the market than a year ago. The exception is car sales, which have increased for the first time for several months. There are, nevertheless, some indications from traders that British goods are becoming more competitive, an example being clothing. Mr Salisse said.

Hall ban on Powell broadcast

By Pat Healy
Race Relations Correspondent

Fear of demonstrations by anti-racist groups at the presence of Mr Enoch Powell on the panel of Radio Four's *Any Questions?* programme tonight has led to Toynbee Hall withdrawing its invitation as the venue for the broadcast.

Mr John Profumo, chairman of the Toynbee Hall Centenary, telephoned the producer Ms Carole Stone, to say the programme could not be held there because of worries about the possibility of race riots.

Toynbee Hall is a welfare settlement in the east end of London, which has a high Asian population. Mr Profumo asked for the *Any Questions?* programme to be broadcast from Toynbee Hall this year.

However, in his letter confirming the decision, Mr Profumo referred only to the state of "internal decorations" at Toynbee Hall not being completed in time.

Tonight's programme will be broadcast from Broadcasting House, London, W, and Mr Powell will be joined on the panel by Mr David Steel, leader of the Liberal Party, Lord Soper and David Frost.

Safety move on skips

The Government yesterday announced moves to cut down the risk of vehicles running into building skips left in the road. Mrs Lynda Chalker, Minister of State for Transport, said that from 1986, skips left on the highway must have fluorescent and reflective safety markings, identical in design to yellow and red vertical stripes painted on the back of lorries.

Skips must be lit at night, but lamps were often extinguished or stolen, she said.

Bill tightens rules on lawyers

By Frances Gibb, Legal Affairs Correspondent

Tough new measures to deal with incompetent solicitors, including disbarment from legal aid work or being made to repay fees, were published by the Lord Chancellor yesterday as part of a package of measures designed to give the legal consumer a better deal.

The proposals are contained in the Administration of Justice Bill, which includes measures to widen competition for conveyancing by ending the solicitors' monopoly.

The Bill, which will have its second reading in January, strengthens the Law Society's

powers to deal with complaints of shoddy work.

As well as ordering a solicitor to remit all or part of his costs, the society's council will be able to call in solicitors' files for examination. It will have wider disciplinary powers and be able to appoint extra lay members to its professional purposes committee.

Another provision of the Bill tightens the procedures under which solicitors and barristers can be disbarred from legal aid work or ordered to cancel their fees.

Under the present rules, legal

aid complaints tribunals are composed of past and present members of the Legal Aid Committee, the top administrative body of the legal aid scheme. The committee refers complaints to the tribunals.

An official at the Lord Chancellor's office said yesterday that the main reasons for change were doubts about the present procedure and its infrequent use. Most legal aid complaints are presently dealt with as professional complaints.

The legal aid complaints tribunals have only sat on two cases in the past 12 years.

Cripple sent to jail for smuggling

A disabled man who attempted to smuggle 23 kilos of cannabis, with a street value of more than £60,000, into Britain concealed in the cushion of his wheelchair was jailed for six years at the High Court in Aldridge, Strathclyde, yesterday.

Sat Sethi, aged 49, of Maple Bridge, Stockport, near Manchester, is paralysed in his arms and legs. His helper, Ravi Puri, aged 49, of Slough, Middlesex, was jailed for 30 months.

Eight jailed for £3m. Krugerrands fraud

A Mafia-financed VAT fraud, described by a Central Criminal Court judge as "a grandiose and vicious scheme", led to jail sentences for seven men and a woman yesterday. Customs investigators discovered that the Mafia had put up £1 million "to start the ball rolling", but the masterminds have not been caught.

The money was used to set up several bogus companies and to buy £20 million Krugerrands which were smuggled into England from Jersey and Swit-

zerland and sold to London bullion dealers. The swindlers kept more than £3 million which should have been paid in VAT.

David Barlow, aged 46, of The Hoe, Chalfont, West Bucks, a former public schoolboy, was jailed for six years and made criminally bankrupt for £25 million. He was arrested at the London airport on November 28. He was charged with conspiring with a group of men, including a former South African intelligence officer, to defraud the Crown. He was charged with conspiring with a group of men, including a former South African intelligence officer, to defraud the Crown.

US opens way for air fare cuts

The United States' Justice Department yesterday told British Airways it would not challenge a proposed reduction of 35 per cent in its New York-London fares this winter, clearing the way for implementation of a controversial fare change.

The BA proposal would offer an Apex fare, or a late purchase fare, of 378 dollars (about £234) round trip weekdays and 428 dollars (about £266) round trip weekends. BA's current winter Apex fare is 579 dollars (£296) round trip weekdays and 619 dollars (£330) on weekends.

The fares, proposed by all carriers on the route, had been blocked by the Government in October because it wanted assurances that the US Government would not seek to prosecute British carriers if the fares were challenged as "predatory" under US anti-trust laws.

The British budget airline Virgin Atlantic, had objected that the lower fares were designed to drive it out of business.

Grants cut means fewer concerts

By David Hewson
Arts Correspondent

London stands to lose up to 40 concerts next year because of a £280,000 cut in Arts Council funds to the capital's four main state-subsidized orchestras.

The council had originally planned to stop the grant of one of the four, the London Symphony Orchestra, the Royal Philharmonic, the Philharmonic and the London Philharmonic.

But Mr Luke Rittner, the council's secretary general, said yesterday that the £280,000 to be saved by withdrawing the backing of one orchestra would now be taken from all four, in proportion to their current level of grant.

Mr Rittner said that the council would not publish the report commissioned by a special adviser, Mr Neil Duncan, on the four London orchestras.

From 1986, all four London orchestras will have to gain advance approval of their concert plans before receiving Arts Council funds.

Mr Ian Maclay, managing director of the RPO, said that the cut would cost the company £59,000. "Much more worrying is what happens in the future," Mr Maclay said. "We already have a programme for 1986-87 and now we understand that if it doesn't meet approval there could be no grant for it." A spokesman said that each "lost" night at the Royal Festival Hall cost the Greater London Council nearly £4,000.

Man committed on rape charges

A labourer charged with 13 offences, including three of raping women at Edlesborough and Linslade, Bedfordshire and Brampton, South Yorkshire, was committed for trial yesterday by magistrates at Dunstable, Bedfordshire.

The man, aged 32, is also accused of possessing a shotgun, burglary, entering a house with intent to steal, entering a house with intent to rape, indecently assaulting a female, indecently assaulting a man and inflicting grievous bodily harm.

Reporting restrictions were not lifted.

Christmas Eve wedding

Duncan Goodhew, the Olympic gold medal swimmer, and his fiancée, Miss Anne Patterson (above) are to be married on Christmas Eve. Mr Goodhew, aged 27, met Anne, aged 25, of North Carolina, when a friend introduced them at East Croydon railway station.

For Mr Goodhew it was love at first sight: "I could not

believe my luck." But Anne, was not so sure.

Mr Goodhew was wearing red shorts and socks and turquoise sneakers: "She didn't know what to make of me," he said yesterday.

The wedding will be at Chipstead, Surrey. (Photograph: Harry Kerr).

Bill aims to prevent tooth decay

By Nicholas Timmins, Social Services Correspondent

The Government yesterday introduced its Bill to empower water authorities in England, Wales and Scotland to add fluoride to water supplies to prevent tooth decay. The move follows a ruling last year by the Scottish courts that Strathclyde Regional Council had no power to add fluoride to the water supply.

While that ruling does not apply outside Scotland, the Bill is intended to provide Scottish water authorities with the power to add fluoride, and to ensure there is no doubt about the powers of the English and Welsh authorities and boards. Similar legislation is to be

introduced for Northern Ireland.

The Government's move coincides with the report of a study chaired by Professor George Knox, Professor of Social Medicine at Birmingham University, which has reviewed the evidence on whether adding fluoride carries any additional risk of cancer.

The report, which has not yet been published, is believed to have found that adding the chemical carries no additional risk.

The finding is based on

comparisons of cancer rates in areas where water is fluorinated naturally with areas that are fluoride-free and have had the chemical added.

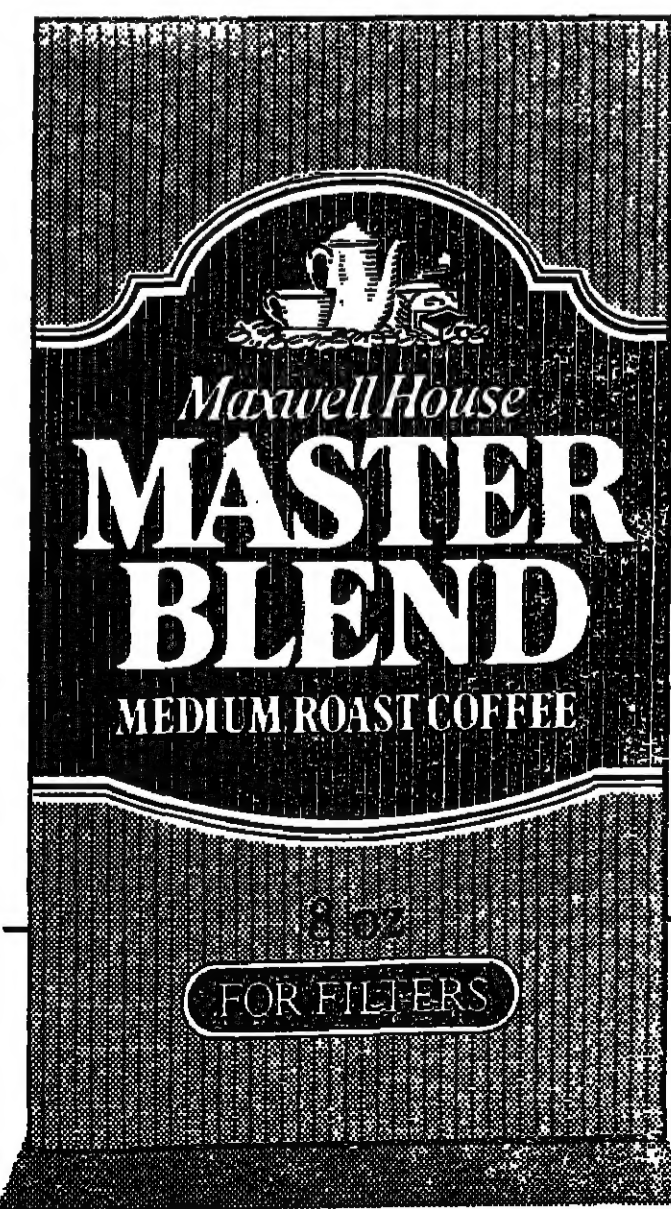
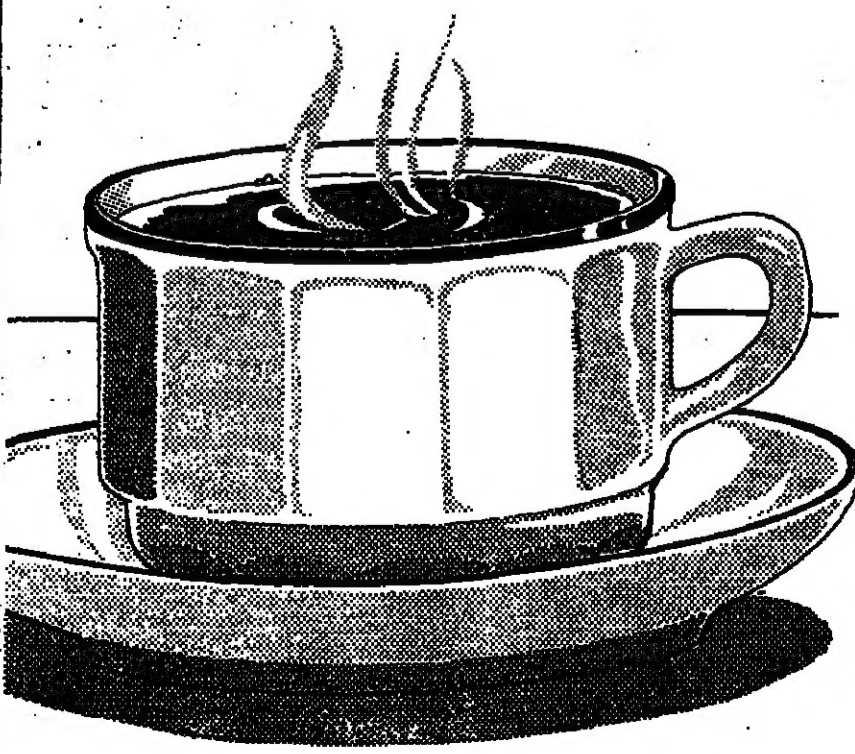
The Medical Research Council is assessing Japanese studies suggesting fluoride can damage the genetic material of cells.

But British scientists have maintained that fluoride levels used in the Japanese studies are far higher than would result from fluoridating water.

The Bill is still likely, however, to face fierce opposition from the anti-fluoridation lobby.

After all the wine and turkey, leave some room for a good roast.

Master Blend fresh ground coffee to the educated palate is rounded, full-bodied and smooth. Try Master Blend yourself and discover why it's the finest.



Don't compromise this Christmas, experience Master Blend the finest ground coffee you can make.

PARLIAMENT DECEMBER 20 1984

Aviation Bill grounded

Havers defended

Commentary

Hold-up to Bill implementing Heathrow pledge

CIVIL AVIATION

The Government is proposing to postpone the committee stage of the Civil Aviation Bill until after a decision has been taken on whether to expand Stansted.

The Bill, which gives the Secretary of State for Transport power to limit aircraft movements at British airports, was given a second reading on November 21 but rebel Conservatives have blocked its further progress.

Five years ago the Government promised it would impose a limit of 275,000 aircraft movements per year at Heathrow.

Announcing the postponement to the Commons, Mr Nicholas Ridley, Secretary of State for Transport, said the Government was attempting to honour that pledge by bringing in the Bill.

Those who frustrated it in committee (the said) are those who must be blamed for the delay. It is impossible to get the legislative powers to implement the limit.

In his statement Mr Ridley revealed that the Bill had a second reading majority of 78. However on a separate occasion, Tuesday December 11 and Tuesday December 18, the Standing Committee to which the Bill was committed had to vote on the Bill.

On the first occasion, the Bill was defeated by 10 votes. On the second occasion, the Bill was defeated by 10 votes.

The Government will need the powers in the Bill if at any time it is decided to impose a limit on aircraft movements at any British airport for environmental reasons. Equally it will need the powers even if the environmental reasons for the limit are not imposed, because both Heathrow and Gatwick are rapidly approaching the point when demand for runway space will exceed the physical capacity for extended periods of the day.

Proceeding with the Bill would not therefore have prejudiced the decision the Minister for Housing and Construction and I will have to take on the inspectors' report. Nevertheless, the Government suggests that further consideration of the Bill be postponed until that decision has been taken.

I note the chairman has recommended the committee for February 13. I must make it clear to the House that, it is very likely that no decision on Stansted - Terminal Five will be possible by then. We will therefore in due course seek to arrange with the chairman when the committee shall meet again.

Mr Peter Smeeth, Opposition spokesman on transport, said: "With a little commonsense on Mr Ridley's part this problem would not have occurred. It is only due to his arrogance that this unique public humiliation is taking place."

How can Mr Ridley say that demand for runway space will exceed the physical capacity when the chairman of the Heathrow scheduling committee and the BAA have both indicated that the physical capacity of Heathrow is not in excess of the present air traffic movement?

In any case, it is not such a problem as Mr Ridley outlined which is the refusing international flights at Manchester? Does Mr Ridley anticipate a painful return when the Prime Minister returns?

Mr Ridley, I have never before heard it suggested to be arrogant to believe that the will of the majority of the House should not be frustrated.

It is not only a question of annual capacity of Heathrow and Gatwick, it is a question of capacity at certain times of the day and certain times of the year which must become congested without these powers.

Sir Humphrey Atkins (Spelthorne, C) Hundreds and thousands, if not millions, of Londoners and others affected by Heathrow are looking to Mr Ridley to honour the Conservative Government's promise.

Mr Ridley: The Government has attempted to honour that promise by bringing a Bill into the House and taking it into committee. Those who frustrated it in committee are those who must be blamed if it proves impossible to get the legislative powers to implement the 275,000 ATM limit.

Mr Alan Haselhurst (Saffron Walden, C) Mr Ridley is in danger of risking a certain amount of exasperation amongst his own colleagues if he continues to insist that there is no connection between the contents of the Bill and the decision on airports policy.

Mr John Wilkinson (Ruislip-Northwood, C) We, on the standing committee, are certainly keen that his quasi-judicial position should not be prejudiced. Would it not have been better if he had come to

the House and said unequivocally he was going to withdraw the Bill in its entirety until such time as he had reached a decision on airports policy?

Any fudging of the air traffic movements limit is impossible since the limit is a limit on the 275,000 limit was unjustifiable on environmental grounds and air traffic control considerations.

Will he listen to the advice of British Airways who say this limit is totally unjustifiable? Will he listen to the advice of the Secretary of State for Transport who says this limit is totally unjustifiable?

Mr Ridley: Surely the boot is on the other foot. Would he not be prepared to listen to the other side of the case he has just put and listen to the reasons why it should be proceeded with this Bill would not have had the effect he fears and would certainly not have prejudiced the decision on Stansted?

Instead of being prepared to listen to these arguments, he preferred to vote for the debate to be terminated and he would have tried to bring in the Bill. He does not have the faith in his own arguments that he suggests.

Mr Anthony Lloyd (Surrey, Lab): Will he accept the need for a proper review of airports policy? Will he guarantee the democratic process will be maintained and that we will have a vote on a motion on Stansted and he will agree to be bound by the decision of this House?

Mr Ridley: Mr Biffen. Leader of the House, has made it clear there will be a debate on the Stansted/Terminal Five issue. I am sure I would be right to leave the form and nature of the debate to him.

Mr Toby Jessel (Twickenham, C): It would be wrong to allow the opinions of the planning inspector, who is more than an advisor, and who differs from the report of the previous inspector, to override the clear commitment of the Government to millions of people living around Heathrow.

Mr Ridley: I agree it is difficult to disagree with the inspectors' report. It is a question of capacity at certain times of the day and certain times of the year which must become congested without these powers.

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British intelligence 'murdered woman'

BELGRANO

Mr Tam Dalyell (Dundee, Lab), leading member of the Government in the Commons early today (Thursday) said that he had been told that British intelligence had murdered an elderly woman in a search of her home for sensitive documents.

Mr Giles Shaw, Minister of State, Home Office, in reply to what he called Mr Dalyell's "important revelations", said a substantial police investigation was still continuing and he would not be able to say whether the woman had been murdered or not.

Mr Dalyell said the woman was the 78-year-old Miss Hilma Murrell to look for documents relating to the Falklands. The woman was found dead in her home in the Falklands.

Miss Murrell's nephew, Commander Rob Green, who had held a key position in Naval Intelligence during the war, had been found dead in his home in the Falklands. He considered the

Falklands to be an unnecessary war, was applied by the sinking of the Belgrano, although considering it an unfortunate necessity and had taken early retirement after 20 years in the Navy.

This had put him under suspicion of the Prime Minister and her colleagues. The search had been for any Belgrano related documents of Commander Green in his son's home.

There are persons in Westminster and/or Whitehall (he said) who know a great deal more about the violent death of Miss Murrell than they have so far been prepared to divulge.

He demanded to know on whose Ministerial authority, if any, the search of Miss Murrell's home took place. "Whether it was the Intelligence Services 'doing their own thing' or if they had done it on political orders."

He said he was increasing misgivings about the role of the Intelligence Services in this country. The intruders had no intention of doing away with Miss Murrell, but of searching her home while she was out. On March 21 she returned unexpectedly and fought them. They

injured her and panicked. Things went disastrously wrong. She was killed (he said), or left to die from hypothermia, and the cover-up had to begin, because the searchers were members of British Intelligence, I am informed.

He discounted the already reported theory that Miss Murrell's death was connected with the paper she had written on the problems of nuclear waste which she hoped would be read at the Sizewell B inquiry.

After the murder, he went on, the police had wrongly said the house had been searched. It had been a sophisticated break-in and the house searched carefully. They said she had been sexually assaulted. She had not.

What is the purpose of this kind of inactivity (he said) other than to sweep up on the carpet? Were the police told at high authority to act in an uncharacteristically incompetent and slapdash way? There were errors on the time of discovery of the body. The Special Branch were involved at an early stage.

The body had stab wounds and a blow under one eye. A cremation was carried out in a hush of an indecent

hurry. Proper forensic procedures seemed to have been blocked. The police were told they could not have an independent autopsy.

Miss Murrell had telephoned friends in a frightened state before her death. All the inconsistencies pointed away from the current official explanation.

In an odd way (he said) it is like the Belgrano affair - small inconsistencies seem to be part of larger inconsistencies, small lies

part of larger lies. Mr Giles Shaw, replying, said police had found no evidence of forcible entry at Miss Murrell's home but success could have been through an

insecure door. There was evidence of a struggle in an upstairs room with the offender, who had apparently previously made a systematic search of the premises, drawn the front downstairs curtains and left an electric light on.

Miss Murrell was then taken in her own car to the scene of her death. She was beaten and stabbed and left to die of hypothermia and the car left on the side of the road near a copse.

The West Mercia police had devoted considerable resources to the investigation. There was no evidence whatever to link Miss Murrell's death to her connection with anti-nuclear organisations.

Legal aid assessment

Good progress has been made in bringing into effect a number of the recommendations of the Rayner Committee on legal aid. The Lord Chancellor, Lord Hailsham, said during question time in the House of Lords today.

Discussions are still continuing on the main issues raised (he said) and I expect the Government's final

decision to be announced early in the new year.

Lord Hailsham of Ladbroke (Lab): Last June it was discovered that under certain secret regulations, the "Code of Practice" of the Department of Health and Social Security were being ordered to take action which was illegal.

Lord Hailsham: The code is being revised.

Marriage must not be used as entry device

IMMIGRATION

Britain simply could not allow marriage to be used as a device for people to come here and to go on to the labour market at a time of high unemployment. Mr David Waddington, Minister of State, Home Office, said during Commons question time.

He was answering Mr Jonathan Sayeed (Bristol East, C) who had said it would not be a good idea to import more people to do the same few jobs during high unemployment.

Ms Clare Short (Birmingham, Lab) said the rule requiring a man to prove it was his primary purpose to come to the UK, when seeking entry, was being discriminated against by Asian origin. Hundreds were not able to marry the man of their choice. Even worse, families with children were being discriminated against by Asian origin.

Mr Waddington said a case Ms

Short was obviously referring to proved that it was easy and fair to apply this test. In that case, the decision of the entry clearance officer in the sub-committee was upheld both by the adjudicator and the immigration appeals tribunal.

He said later that the primary purpose rule was not an attack on marriage or on arranged marriages. Delays were fewer than under Labour.

The failure rate of applications by husbands and fiancées to come to Britain was one for five. In 1982 the overall refusal rate was 63 per cent but dropped in 1983 to 47 per cent. Refusals on grounds of primary purpose were at 25 per cent and on 33 per cent.

Mr Christopher Murphy (Welwyn Hatfield, C) said it would be wrong for any MP to abuse his or her position in immigration cases.

Mr Waddington was sure MPs did not want to abuse their position. He was not willing to abuse their position. He was not willing to abuse their position. He was not willing to abuse their position.

abused. Recently, someone affected by the primary purpose rule had remained in the country for months and was still here because an MP had made representations.

Mr Gerald Kaufman, chief Opposition spokesman on home affairs, said that the primary purpose rule was a device to keep out those who were not wanted. He said that the rule was a device to keep out those who were not wanted.

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Kinnock's view: Levene appointment stinks

DEFENCE

The appointment of Mr Peter Levene, chairman of the Strategic Defence and Armaments Committee, as Chief of Defence Procurement, has caused a storm of controversy. Mr Kinnock said that the appointment was a disgrace.

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personal friendship with the Secretary of State for Defence (Mr Michael Heseltine) what can justify the appointment of Mr Peter Levene as Chief of Defence Procurement?

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Mr Kinnock: Many things have been said about Mr Levene, but at £95,000 a year for five years, he is certainly not coming cheap.

Will Mr Biffen now answer the question? What justification can there be for an appointment that doubles the salary of the current appointee?

What earthly justification is there in savings to the national exchequer in effective defence procurement. The whole recent history of the Government's relationship with this man gives grounds for suspicion.

Mr Biffen: A judgement was made by the Secretary of State for Defence about Mr Levene's ability. A man successfully executing a job at £90,000 a year is a damned sight cheaper than a failure at half that price. (Protests and cries of "Oh".)

Mr Andrew Stewart (Sheffield, C) in view of the historic decision by Nottinghamshire NUM today in taking steps to protect its members,

other week. That struck him as money badly spent.

Mr Robert Kilroy-Silk (Knowsley, North, Lab) for the Opposition, said there were implacably opposed to the introduction of advertising on radio and television.

The advent of advertising would destroy public service broadcasting which was the envy of the rest of the world.

The political independence of the BBC had been under threat from the Government. The Prime Minister had been leading the way in attempts to threaten, cajole, bully and put pressure on the BBC.

Mr Giles Shaw, Minister of State, Home Office, said free television to pensioners would cost £250m on the present basis and would remove a income for some time. Present income. Under Labour there would be no pensioners' television.

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has Mr Biffen any Christmas message for Mr Arthur Scargill?

Mr Biffen: Since we exist in a period of charity such as Christmas, may I first make clear that nothing in my last exchange with the leader of the Opposition should in any sense be construed as casting any reflection on Mr David Perry.

I am saying that because I am prepared to exemplify the spirit of charity to those outside the House who cannot answer back. That is why I am saying that.

My message to Mr Scargill is very simple: that there exists a Nacods agreement which provides an excellent framework for a return to the negotiating table.

Mr Alexander Carrile (Montgomery, Lab) was it part of the deal that Sir Frank Cooper, former Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Defence, should become chairman of Mr Peter Levene's former company?

Mr Biffen: It was not part of the deal.

There was not, nor would the Government contemplate, a shoot to kill policy for the security forces in Northern Ireland. Mr Douglas Hurd, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, said during question time in the Commons today.

Mr Kevin MacNamara (Hull North, Lab) and Mr John Hume (Foyle, SDLP) challenged Mr Hurd's statement that there was no shoot to kill policy. Mr MacNamara referred to a recent shooting in Derry and said many people in the Province believed a policy existed.

Mr Hurd said he understood the security forces had advance information about the two IRA members involved in the Derry shooting so there should have been plenty of time for alternative action to be considered.

Mr Hurd said the rule of law would be adhered to and all such cases would be investigated. It would be wrong for him to comment further on the Derry incident.

Parliament today

Commons (9.30): Christmas adjournment debates on various subjects.

The following Acts received Royal Assent: Consolidated Fund (No 2); Friendly Societies; and Greater London Council (Money) (No 2).

No shoot to kill policy exists

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Dairy Farming Tribunal

Farmers fight quota cuts

By John Young
Agriculture Correspondent

On a dark, damp Sunday afternoon, in a shabby building in Cannon Street, London, Mr Jim Reed is putting in some of the 100 hours a week that he works as secretary of the Dairy Produce Quota Tribunal.

Cheerful, friendly and extrovert, he is the antithesis of the caricature grey-faced civil servant. Seconded from the Ministry of Agriculture at half a day's notice last May, he has watched the tribunal grow from 10 to nearly 90 members, and has seen the deadline for the completion of its work slip from September to December, and now, perhaps, the end of January.

When the Government announced in March that all dairy farmers would have to cut production by 9 per cent this year, it had no idea that more than 20,000 of them, about half the total, would turn to the appeals procedure to plead for special treatment.

Mr Reed concedes that many are trying it on. But some farmers in trouble, who have borrowed from banks to expand their herds, say that their reduced income will not be enough to meet repayments.

To appeal successfully a farmer must be able to show that because of disease, accident, theft or compulsory land purchase his 1983 output was not typical; or that at the time quotas were imposed he had already begun a government-approved expansion scheme; or, in what are known as exceptional hardship cases, that he had entered into financial commitment which could be paid for only by the sale of milk.

All except the exceptional hardship cases go first to local panels, but there is a right of appeal to the tribunal. So far it has heard about 1,250 appeals against panel decisions, and about 900 hardship applications, and has delivered some 1,300 verdicts.

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Police chiefs in favour of jury trials in fraud cases, but urge reforms

By Stewart Tendler, Crime Reporter

Most chief constables and senior investigators are in favour of retaining trial by jury in fraud cases, but call for important reforms to streamline court procedures, according to the committee on fraud trials under Lord Roskill.

The evidence, released yesterday, was submitted to the committee by Sir Kenneth Newman, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, on behalf of other forces. It finds only five forces reluctantly arguing for a move to trial by a judge sitting with assessors or a jury of professional specialists.

The dissenting forces, which include the City of London, acknowledge the move should be made only for serious fraud cases and the evidence says that all forces "would be supportive of any improvements in related matters" which, it is generally felt, would obviate the need to tamper with the jury.

Those including the Metropolitan and City Home Fraud Squad supporting the current trial system, whose use for fraud cases has been questioned by senior judges, the Attorney General and the Director of Public Prosecutions - note the London fraud has a 90 per cent conviction rate and court time takes up only 10 per cent of a detective's duties.

The Roskill committee was

told that the police were not "disposed to tamper with the present system of trial by jury which has stood the test of time and considered by many as a bastion of the freedom of liberty enjoyed by every individual in the land. Many believe the constitutional arguments in favour of trial by jury are very persuasive."

A jury of professional specialists might not match the standard of morality applied by a jury chosen at random.

The evidence criticized passing the DPP for sometimes not proceeding to trial because a case was considered too complex for a jury to understand. The evidence noted: "We are not convinced that on each occasion such decisions are necessarily correct."

Convictions and proceedings were more likely to succeed if the progress of cases could be improved by changes including the use of modern techniques such as graphic displays in the courtroom.

The use of such techniques are among a list of recommendations which may well meet opposition from the legal profession and even the judiciary.

The police said the right to an "old style" committal, where all the evidence is reviewed, should be removed unless a defence can make the case for one. The



Drunk rail driver 'forgot' to let passengers off train

A British Rail driver was dismissed after he drove a commuter train through a station without stopping after drinking three pints of beer during his test break.

Geoffrey Bailey, aged 26, of Ritherdon Road, Balham, south-west London, was so drunk he forgot he was carrying passengers and drove past the Sydenham platform in South London without letting them off, Sutton Magistrates' Court was told yesterday.

Climber bids for 277 peaks

Peak time: Mr Martin Moran, a mountaineering accountant from Sheffield, set out today to spend the 90 official days of winter bagging the 277 Scottish Munros (Ronald Faux writes).

A Munro is a Scottish peak of more than 3,000 feet. The attempt will demand more than 1,000 miles of walking and 380,000 feet of climbing and is in aid of the Third World charity Intermediate Technology. Mr Moran, aged 29, will be accompanied for much of the time by his wife.

Big rise in number of arson cases

By Our Home Affairs Correspondent

The number of deliberate fires in occupied buildings rose from 8,700 to 15,500 in the five years up to 1983, an average annual increase of 12 per cent, according to Home Office statistics issued yesterday.

The most common cause of accidental fires in dwellings was the unintentional misuse of equipment or appliances, such as leaving a cooker ring turned on and unattended or knocking over a heater. Misuse accounted for more than one third of all fires in dwellings between 1978 and 1983.

Non-fatal fire casualties have increased from 6,720 to 10,040 over the decade, during which fatal casualties have fluctuated between 849 and 1,096. The 1983 total was 903.

Fires in road vehicles have increased by some 16,000 since 1977 to 40,000 in 1983, 1,000 more than in the previous year. Fire Statistics United Kingdom 1983 (S3 Division, Home Office, 50 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9AT, £3.50).

Libel case award for Labour's chief whip

Mr Michael Cocks, the Labour Chief Whip, received undisclosed libel damages in the High Court yesterday over allegations that he planned to desert his party.

Mr Desmond Browne, for Mr Cocks, told Mr Justice Drake that a *Mail on Sunday* article, published in October, claimed that the Labour Party faced a mass defection of MPs, some of whom planned to join the Social Democrats.

It was accompanied by a photograph of Mr Cocks with the caption: "Chief Whip set to lead deserters."

The article quoted unidentified friends of Mr Cocks who claimed he was on the point of forming a caucus of his own followers, which would result in him deciding whether to become an independent Labour MP, join the SDP or leave politics altogether, and would provoke a crisis in his Bristol South constituency. There was not a word of truth in the allegations, Mr Browne said.

The newspaper agreed to pay damages and all legal costs.

Sneeze caused death

A lorry driver's sneeze ended the career of actress Charlotte Long, and inquest in Oxford was told yesterday.

The sneeze caused Mr Brian Launders, of Slough, Berkshire, to hit the back of Miss Long's broken-down car on the hard

shoulder of the M4. Miss Long, aged 18, daughter of Lord Long, died on October 6, three days after the accident, which happened as she was driving to her mother's home at Bradford-on-Avon. A verdict of accidental death was recorded.

1,000 new teachers still out of work

By Lucy Hodges, Education Correspondent

Almost 1,000 teachers who completed their training last year are still out of work and looking for a job, according to figures published by the Department of Education and Science.

Those trained to teach in nursery, primary and middle schools have fared relatively badly in the employment market compared with teachers trained for secondary schools. Women are shown to be less employable than men. Both men and women with a postgraduate certificate in Education found it more difficult to find work than those with a BEd degree.

The statistics, which look at what happened to teachers who completed their training in 1983, show that 77 per cent got jobs (compared with 71 per cent the previous year).

A further 3 per cent decided not to go into teaching or went abroad. Of those who could not find work, nursery teachers had the most difficulty with 22 per cent of them remaining unemployed.

Teachers trained to teach art and light craft, English, religious education, history and geography at secondary level had more difficulty than those trained in

commercial and business studies, home economics, craft, design and technology, chemistry and physics.

Powell attack

The government was accused yesterday of "barbarism" in wanting to spend money on science education at the expense of other subjects.

It was educational heresy to justify spending money on education to make factories and enterprises more profitable and competitive, Mr Enoch Powell told the annual dinner of the Merchant Taylors' Company in London.

"The state which tries to use its power to exalt and promote the one kind of learning to the disadvantage of the other is an inhuman and barbarous state," he said. "In the end it will bring down upon its subjects the penalties which attend upon all humanity and barbarism, when the greedy expectations attached to the advancement of science turn to bitterness and disillusionment."

Education was a good thing in itself, Mr Powell remarked. It was a strong human instinct and needed no secondary justification.

PIE men must stay in prison

Two leading members of Paedophile Information Exchange, the campaigning child sex group, must stay in jail, the Court of Appeal ruled yesterday.

Both men, who are targets for violence from other prisoners, must serve their full sentences. Mr Justice Macpherson, sitting with Lord Justice O'Connor and Mr Justice Evans, said.

The two, David Bremner, aged 45 and David Joy, aged 43, were members of the executive of "PIE" which disbanded in August. They were convicted and jailed at the Central Criminal Court in November of sending indecent material through the post.

Bremner, a former bio-chemist, of Upper Clapton Road, Clapton, east London was jailed for six months. Joy, an unemployed mathematics teacher, of Russell Street, Loughborough, Leicestershire, who was also found guilty of publishing an obscene article, was jailed for 18 months.

Damages for sheepdog trialists

Hywel Jones and Ellis Edwards, the sheepdog trialists won undisclosed libel damages in the High Court yesterday from the BBC and HTV over allegations that they tried to improperly influence a competition judge.

Mr Jonathan Sofer, their counsel, told Deputy Judge Mr Patrick Bennett, QC, that the allegation was "wholly untrue".

It was now accepted by the BBC and HTV, who screened the allegation in November 1982, that both men had not been guilty of any misconduct. They agreed to pay the men suitable libel damages and their legal costs.

Peking order

An academy of science laboratory in Peking is to get £250,000 of specialist laboratory furniture and equipment, designed by Nottinghamshire county architects' department, and made by the consortium CLASP.

Times supplement failed to substantiate charge

After printing an allegation reflecting on a parent-teacher association, a newspaper had a clear duty either to substantiate it or retract, the Press Council said today.

It upheld a complaint against *The Times Educational Supplement*, Scotland, by the parent-teacher association at Bellahouston Academy, 20 Gower Terrace, Glasgow.

The newspaper published an article by its deputy editor, Mr Neil Munro, about a consortia plan for Strathclyde secondary schools to increase the range of specialist subjects available.

The article mentioned the real and 'tenuous' connection between education officials, but said that teachers' and parents' reactions had tended to concentrate on the quality of the local bus service or, "as in the case of Bellahouston, anonymous leaflets cautioning parents against their children 'conforming' with Roman Catholics."

Later the newspaper published a letter from Mr David Liddell, the Educational Institute for Scotland

representative at Bellahouston, which said that the only leaflets sent out by the association were neither anonymous nor sectarian in tone or content.

The letter was published with an editor's footnote saying that the description of the leaflets as "tenuous" should have made it evident that there was no gratuitous slur intended against parents and teachers at the school.

Later Mrs A D Hudson, secretary of the association, wrote to Mr Munro asking for a copy of the offending leaflet or at least an indication of the source of the information.

Mr Munro replied that there was no suggestion, although perhaps an implication which he regretted, that the leaflets originated within the academy. The newspaper would be willing to say so. He offered space for a letter as an alternative.

The Press Council said that the offer to publish a letter from the complainant was not a sufficient remedy, nor was the publication of another letter on the subject with a footnote saying that no slur was intended against parents and teachers.

WHERE DO WISE MEN SHOP AT CHRISTMAS?

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By law we are not allowed to sell alcohol to anyone under 18. Officers subject to availability, alterations to duty or VAT.

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5% discount on purchases of 12 or more bottles.

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At this superb price of £1.49 no further discount is available.

1.99 2.25 2.29 2.49

5% discount on purchases of 12 or more bottles.

Gorbachov says Soviet trade with Britain will grow by nearly half

By John Lawless

Anglo-Soviet trade, after years in the doldrums, is about to expand faster than anything seen in the past decade, Mr Mikhail Gorbachov, the number two in the Kremlin, told businessmen at a lunch in London yesterday.

The Soviet visitor said that in discussions with Mrs Margaret Thatcher this week "our assessment is that we can increase the level of trade in the near future by between 40 and 50 per cent," he also spoke of the "increased political role" of business links, and said trade embargoes hurt most those who put them in place.

Listing the sectors which hold the best opportunities for British companies, he first mentioned motor vehicles. He then read out a list of areas in which he rated British chances most highly up to 1990: chemicals, the oil and gas industries, metallurgy, engineering, consumer goods and agriculture and food processing and packaging.

It is believed that Soviet teams have had considerable difficulties in recent months in deep-drilling for oil, and British Gas and Shell recently discussed the possibility of using North Sea technology in the Barents Sea.

British trade specialists are particularly encouraged by an important policy switch by the Russians in considering for the first time turn-key projects, in which foreign contractors are allowed to handle virtually the whole operation in the development of new complexes.

The Austrians were allowed to do so for the first time in building a steel mill and it is assumed that in the important industrial sector, other foreign companies will be permitted to operate more or less on Western commercial lines.

All the projects mentioned by Mr Gorbachov come under the new Soviet Five Year Plan, due to start in 1986. The fact that he mentioned that John Brown Engineering, David McKee and ICI were bidding for oilfield plants worth more than £1 billion reinforces the widespread belief that Britain is a front-runner for these projects.

Gorbachov mentioned for the first time that he had also

discussed the possibility of putting up a new fertilizer and pesticides complex.

Behind the euphoria, though, is the fact that UK-Soviet trade has shrunk to a low level in recent years, and any improvement will come from a comparatively low base.

Britain was the major western supplier of imports in the 1950s, but now ranks ninth. Its share of sales has dropped from more than 9 per cent to barely 3 per cent in the past 10 years. Although there has been an apparent strong surge in UK exports this year of more than 50 per cent, worth £602 million by the end of October, two-thirds of the increase has been accounted for by sales of tin and silver through the London metal market.

Soviet credit worthiness is still extremely good and the possibility of greatly increased trade will come as one of the most welcome aspects of Mr Gorbachov's week-long visit.

● OXFORD: Mr Gorbachov got a close look yesterday at the technology Austin Rover soon hopes to export to Moscow.



Driving force: Mr Gorbachov in a Montego MG at the Cowley plant (photograph: Bill Warhurst).

He spent two hours at the factory at Cowley, Oxford and saw the techniques used to produce Maestro, Montego and Rover cars.

Austin Rover is among a number of companies competing for a contract to modernize the Moskvich factory in the Soviet capital.

The Cowley factory has some of the most up-to-date equipment and systems, including a battery of robots.

When the Soviet party swept into the plant, seven Ukrainians staged a silent demonstration, part of a week-long protest in Britain against the imprisonment of their countrymen.

Members of the 35,000-strong Ukrainian community in Britain are staging protests wherever they know Mr Gorbachov is appearing.

Later, Mr Gorbachov's wife, Raisa, paid a surprise visit to Christ Church, Oxford. It was thought she had cancelled the visit, but she turned up unexpectedly and staff hastily arranged for a guide to show her the hall and cathedral which forms part of the college.



Secret mission crew: The five members to man the next space shuttle flight carrying a US military spy satellite above the Soviet Union pose with their insignia. The flight, due for launch on January 23, has been shrouded in secrecy and dogged by controversy. The crew are (from left) Air Force Major Gary Payton, Air Force Lieutenant-Colonel Loren Shriver, Navy Captain Thomas Mattingly, Marine Lieutenant-Colonel Jim Buchli and Air Force Major Ellison Onizuka.

US asks Europe to back Star Wars

From Christopher Thomas Washington

The United States has embarked on an intensive drive to unite its European allies behind its controversial Star Wars programme, emphasizing that Western Europe would benefit from space-based weapons capable of destroying incoming Soviet missiles.

The Reagan Administration is confident that neither Mrs Margaret Thatcher nor Chancellor Helmut Kohl, of West Germany will do anything to weaken America's united front with its NATO allies over the Star Wars initiative. Mrs Thatcher and Herr Kohl have expressed general concern about the militarization of space, a concern shared by President Reagan.

But the Administration is worried by the more forthright reservations about the Star Wars programme expressed by President Mitterrand of France.

Mr Caspar Weinberger, the US Defence Secretary, told foreign correspondents in Washington on Wednesday that Mitterrand was "relatively

Russians test space shuttle

New York (AP) - The Soviet Union yesterday launched a spacecraft into orbit that made a "controlled descent" back to earth. The New York Times reported that it was a third-scale model of a winged, reusable space shuttle. The Cosmos 1614 test fulfilled the flight programme, Tass said.

negative." He denied that Mrs Thatcher and Herr Kohl were opposed to the Star Wars programme.

He said they were looking for more information, a lot of which had now been conveyed. "I don't think there is any opposition to the idea of perfecting, and of trying to develop through research, a programme of defence."

The Star Wars programme, properly known as the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI), is a research project into space weaponry, such as the use of laser beams and other non-nu-

clear ways of destroying incoming missiles. The Soviet Union is strongly denouncing the SDI, claiming that it would lead to the militarization of space.

Critics in the US and Europe argue that pursuing the SDI is at odds with President Reagan's declared determination to enter serious arms reduction talks with the Soviet Union.

The Administration is leading up to the critical US-Soviet arms talks in Geneva on January 7 and 8 with a series of conciliatory statements designed, in part, to mollify European concern about the research programme. Mr Weinberger repeatedly emphasized that the SDI was intended to protect both Western Europe and the United States. "The security of the United States is inseparable from the security of Western Europe," he said.

Mr Larry Speakes, the White House spokesman, pledged flexibility in the talks, which will be conducted between Mr George Shultz, the Secretary of State, and Mr Andrei Gromyko, the Soviet Foreign Minister.

Mr Weinberger dismissed the concept of Fortress America. "It cannot work. There were some people who recommended it twice, in two world wars, and it failed. You can't have a fortress any place concept. America could not live in a world in which Europe was overrun."

Referring to the Soviet SS23 intermediate range missile, Mr Weinberger said that the SDI of the kind the US was planning would be equally effective in dealing both with intermediate range and strategic range weapons.

● BRUSSELS: One thousand five hundred SS20 warheads will be pointing at targets from the Soviet Union before very long (Frederick Bonard writes).

Mr Richard Burthe, the US Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, said that he expected the present total of 387 SS20 launchers to rise to between 450 and 500 when the temporary lag in starting the construction of new bases in the western Soviet Union had been overcome.

David Watt, page 14

EEC beats fishing deadline

From Ian Murray, Brussels

For the first time ever the EEC has succeeded in agreeing on the share-out of the Community fish catch before the start of a new year.

The quick agreement was reached early yesterday morning by dividing up the available catch among member states, according to the terms of the new common fisheries policy (CFP).

The relatively easy end to the negotiations is a good sign that

the CFP will succeed in managing fish stocks in Community waters in future.

The main difficulty was in sorting out what to do about the significant drop in the amount of fish in the waters off Greenland, which is due to leave the EEC next year. A legal way of allowing Greenland to act though it was no longer bound by EEC rules is now expected to be found by officials. Fisheries ministers agreed to

take advantage of the fact that Britain and West Germany had been able to catch their agreed Greenland quota this year, by allowing them to continue trying to catch their full 1984 allocation of 600 next year.

The council was not prepared to give any more fish to Spain than last year, proof that it is determined to maintain a tough line on the subject in negotiations over Spanish EEC membership.

Ten earmark £750m for research

From Our Own Correspondent, Brussels

The EEC now has its very own modern research programme, after Ministers agreed on Wednesday to spend about £750 million over the next five years on eight projects.

According to Viscount Etienne Davignon, the EEC commissioner in charge of the subject, "there is now a real policy and a real movement". It

means that research was no longer a second-class subject in Europe.

About half the money will go to the Joint European Taurus (JET) programme at Culham in Berkshire. The experiment in fusion techniques is now assured, although the money available is considered by Britain to be the bare minimum

The other programmes include work on radio-protection, biotechnology, non-nuclear energies, reactor safety, disposal of radioactive waste, and industrial technologies. They are to be funded for four to five years.

But work cannot start immediately, since the Community has no budget approved

Concern in Libya for two Britons

By Henry Stanhope

Diplomatic Correspondent

The Foreign Office last night was awaiting further news of Mrs Susan Sweisel, the Englishwoman who has been held in Libya for the past 14 months after being convicted of adultery.

Mrs Sweisel, who was previously Miss Bugler of Salisbury, Wiltshire, is being detained in a "house of protection" and her Libyan husband, Mahmood, agrees to her release.

Alternatively she can try to obtain a divorce, which would allow her to return to relatives in Britain.

Mrs Sweisel, aged 33, met her husband when he was studying in Salisbury, and later returned with him to Libya where they have two children.

She was jailed for five days after being brought before a court last year, but when her husband and his family refused to have her back she was transferred to her present residence, where she is under virtual house arrest.

The Foreign Office heard several months ago that a British woman was in "jail" in Libya but located her only last month.

Since then a woman from the British community in Tripoli, has visited Mrs Sweisel four times. Meanwhile Mr Alan Russell, an English teacher from Suffolk who is facing charges, one connected with Libyan state security, made his second court appearance in Tripoli yesterday.

Evidence was heard from both the prosecution and defence. The judge said that verdict and sentence would be announced on January 6.

Fight to save Le Monde moves to boardroom

From Alan Tiliier, Paris

The battle to save *Le Monde* moved yesterday to the paper's boardroom after the failure of the journalists to agree upon a new editor-managing director.

One of the paper's senior editors said: "I am pessimistic about *Le Monde* avoiding closure. We need to find 30 million francs (£2.7 million) by the end of the month to pay salaries and meet demands of the banks."

The famous evening paper, which celebrated its 40th anniversary this week is on the brink of a shutdown despite a last minute move by the journalists whose 40 per cent of

the capital gives them the decisive voice.

The journalists have agreed to set up a committee to examine their own role and power, as well as proposed editorial solutions to falling circulation and rising debts. This new group, made up of journalists and non-journalists, will report in two weeks but many observers think the bankers will not wait that long.

The banks are the paper's main creditors. The biggest bank involved is the state-owned Banque Nationale de Paris.

From Christopher Walker Jerusalem

Israel's Government of National Unity marks its first 100 days in office tomorrow with its first internal crisis solved. But the seeds of a second, potentially more serious one, were sown over deadlocked negotiations on troop withdrawal from Lebanon.

Political commentators have warned that differences over Israel's future in Lebanon could threaten the Government next year after this week's call by Mr Shimon Peres, the Prime Minister, for a unilateral Israeli pullout.

Such a move is strongly opposed by some leading figures in the right-wing Likud faction, notably Mr Ariel Sharon, Minister of Trade and Industry and chief architect of the 1982 Lebanon war. The Likud leader, Mr Yitzhak Shamir, told party colleagues this week: "We entered this coalition in order not to give up Judea and Samaria (the West Bank) and not to run away from Lebanon unconditionally."

The solution of the crisis over

allocation of portfolios to the two main religious parties came in the early hours of yesterday morning, shortly before the expiry of the deadline set by the Likud - which had threatened to walk out of the Cabinet.

Although the crisis was resolved, it has left a residue of bitterness between right and left likely to be further exacerbated if the deadlocked military talks with Lebanon over troops withdrawal break down.

Yesterday, discussions broke for a Christmas recess with an Israeli threat that they may never resume next month if there is not a significant change in Lebanon's stand. Such movement by Beirut is not expected as Syria is reluctant to sanction it.

Brigadier General Amos Gilboa, chief of the Israeli delegation, warned that Israel would be unlikely to resume the talks if Lebanon did not respond "positively" during the recess to a call for United Nations troops to be given an expanded role in southern Lebanon.

The general accused the

Lebanese of increasing intransigence during recent sessions. His toughly-worded statement reflected a belief here that the talks have reached a dead end, forcing Israel to decide alone what its next move will be.

Mr Peres told anti-war protesters this week that he was in favour of a full withdrawal, an attitude apparently shared by Mr Yitzhak Rabin, his Defence Minister. But others in the Cabinet support only a partial pullback and the debate is expected to become the dominant issue.

As one Israeli official observed about the need for a decision on various military options that have been put forward: "There can be no good choice; the choices are between bad and worse."

● NAQOURA: After another fruitless day of negotiations at the UN headquarters in Naqoura, southern Lebanon, Israeli Army officers yesterday threatened to break off their troop withdrawal talks with the Lebanese Army unless Beirut agreed to the deployment of UN soldiers between the Awali and

Scientists in Bhopal find more poison gas

Bhopal (Reuters, AP) Scientists have found more methyl isocyanate, the deadly gas which killed 2,500 people in the world's worst industrial accident, than was indicated in records at Union Carbide's factory here, a scientist said.

As residents continued to return in large numbers, Mr S Anandaraman, head of the team converting the chemical into pesticides, told reporters that 19 tonnes had been neutralized and three tonnes remained in steel drums, pipes and a tank.

In Danbury, Connecticut, Union Carbide has hired Burson-Marsteller, a New York public relations firm, to develop a long-term strategy in an attempt to repair damage done to its image.

Pudding eater regains voice

Sydney (Reuters)-Marie Hefernan, aged 25, has regained the power of speech which she lost 12 years ago after eating a piece of Christmas pudding.

She had a coughing fit this week and spat out a 1939 silver threepenny piece which her mother had put in the pudding. The coin had lodged between her vocal cords and prevented them from vibrating, doctors said.

Dressing down for civilians

Jerusalem (Reuters) - Israeli military police have been forcing civilians in army clothes to return them - sometimes there and then.

"Operation Undress", aimed at reclaiming tens of thousands of unreturned army clothes, has meant people having to remove shirts, coats and even trousers in the streets.

Pisani plan



M. Edgar Pisani (above), France's special envoy in New Caledonia, said in Paris yesterday that he was convinced a solution was possible on the troubled island. He said after an hour-long meeting with President Mitterrand that proposals would be put to the different sides next month. He gave no details.

Going West

New York (Reuters) - The Statue of Liberty's torch was flown to California where it will lead the New Year's Day Tournament of Roses parade to raise funds to restore the rusting monument.

Boy sacrificed

Delhi (AP) - A kidnapped boy aged seven, was sacrificed in a bloody temple ritual in northern Uttar Pradesh state by a priest who said his death would appease a demon in another man, the United News of India press agency said.

Visa switch

Peking (AFP)-Business people and tourists visiting China will soon be able to obtain their visas on arrival at Peking airport rather than from Chinese embassies abroad, a Chinese official said here.

Christmas bugs

Tromsø, Norway (Reuters) - An average Christmas tree has about 30,000 bugs and insects on it. Mr Arne Fjellberg, a scientist here, said Microscopic investigation revealed mites, fleas, lice, parasites, wasps, spiders and beetles, most of which die, after some days.

IT IS NOT EASY TO RUN A TRANSPORT EQUIPMENT INDUSTRY LIMITED TO A HOME MARKET OF 8 MILLION PEOPLE. SO FROM ITS SECOND YEAR OF OPERATION, VOLVO STARTED TO EXPORT. THE FIRST COUNTRY TO IMPORT VOLVO'S PRODUCTS WAS FINLAND. TODAY THEY ARE MARKETED IN ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD, WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON THE NORDIC COUNTRIES, WESTERN EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA. NOW 86% OF VOLVO'S SALES ARE OUTSIDE SWEDEN AND THEY ACCOUNT FOR 12% OF THE COUNTRY'S EXPORTS.

VOLVO

Spanish uproar over Gadaffi's flying visit

From Harry Debelius
Madrid

All Libyan troops were out of Chad by September 16 and "any one can go and see for himself," Colonel Gadaffi, the Libyan leader, said in Majorca yesterday.

At a news conference the morning after his surprise five-hour visit to the island with the Spanish Prime Minister, Señor Felipe González, and the former Austrian chancellor, Dr Bruno Kreisky, Colonel Gadaffi also denied accusations of links with the Basque terrorist organisation, ETA (Basque Homeland and Liberty).

The unannounced meeting took place at the instigation of Dr Kreisky, who arranged the Libyan leader's "private" visit to Spain and took part in the talks. Colonel Gadaffi flew in, without notice to news media, about midday on Wednesday. The Spanish Prime Minister arrived from Madrid in the afternoon.

At an earlier, separate news conference at the end of the meeting, Señor González said no specific agreement was reached, but there was "reciprocal loyalty in our relationship".

Señor González said he received assurances from the Libyan leader that the recent unity pact between Libya and Morocco would not harm Spanish interests. The meeting was arranged to discuss how Spain could co-operate with North African countries.

The Spanish Prime Minister said the question of terrorism did not come up, and added: "Neither Spain nor Libya would do anything to disturb the stability of the other country".

The references to ETA were timely, because of newly-published evidence strongly suggesting that Libya sent a cheque



Three faces of Gadaffi: The Libyan leader in a variety of moods after his talks with Señor González

for \$900,000 (£750,000) to an ETA leader in France only a few months ago.

Spanish newspapers attacked the Prime Minister for meeting Colonel Gadaffi and at least two big papers demanded that he explain in Parliament the circumstances and the outcome of the talks.

El País, which usually sides with the Government, was particularly hostile. In a leading article, it spoke of "the facilities which international terrorism... has obtained in Libya from the hands of this leader, whom

some believe to be a lunatic. His activity and that of his activist groups have generated such serious episodes as the one at the Libyan Embassy in London".

The paper referred to the Majorca meeting, which a government spokesman described as an act of "direct diplomacy" as "a circus".

The leading article said: "The conditions of surprise and misinformation surrounding the talks in Majorca give the impression that Libyan interests were uppermost."

The liberal *Diario 16* editorially roasted Señor González for meeting on Spanish soil with "the terrorist politician who sends abundant cash to finance ETA, the organization which represents the principal danger to the stability of Spanish democracy".

PARIS: French and Greek military officers who are already in Tripoli, will go to Chad to monitor the withdrawal of Libyan troops, M. Charles Hernu, the French Defence Minister, said yesterday (Reuters reports).

His remarks to journalists came after an announcement by M. Roland Dumas, the Foreign Minister.

DAKAR: The Gambia and Libya have decided to resume diplomatic relations immediately, it was announced in Banjul (Susan MacDonald writes).

Relations were broken off by the Gambia in 1980 amid accusations that the Libyans were training young Gambians with a view to overthrowing the regime of President Jawara.

Mild spell saves wine harvest in Germany

Oestrich-Winkel, West Germany (Reuter) - Growers of the world's northernmost commercial wines are relieved and delighted that the bulk of their 1984 crop has been saved after coming close to catastrophe.

"Pleasant little table wines" is how Count Erwin Matschke-Greif described this year's wine from his family estate, Schloss Vollrath, above this ancient vinegrowing town, beside the Rhine.

As President of the West German Estate Winegrowers' Association, he said this picture could be applied across the nation's vineyards, although there were regional bright spots where qualities were better than average. Experts speak of a modest but very drinkable vintage.

The surprisingly favourable outcome of 1984's harvest for West German growers, who concentrate mainly on white wines, contrasted with the gloom of a few weeks ago.

A drenching, sunless summer followed by an unusually chilly autumn left the grapes still unripe on the eve of harvest. On top of this, there were mildew outbreaks.

"The first two weeks of November were the best summer we had this year," Count Matschke-Greif joked. Many growers had left their grapes on the vine late and the unseasonable dry, sunny spell saved the crop.

The 1984 yield is estimated at between 770 and 780 million litres, 40 per cent down on last year but only about 15 per cent under the long-term average.

Greeks in Albania allowed closer links with Athens

From Mario Modiano, Athens

Albania, the most isolated and introverted of all the communist states in the Balkans, has agreed to allow closer contacts between its Greek minority and Greece.

Mr Karolos Papoulias, the Greek Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, said: "To the extent that our relations with Albania improve, the Greek minority will be facilitated in its contacts with Greece. In the first phase, this will benefit the aged and the sick."

He was speaking after a trip to Albania earlier this month, the first political visit at Cabinet level in more than 40 years - since Italy used Albania as a springboard to invade Greece in the Second World War.

Albania recently put out letters to Greece and a few Western countries for improving relations in all fields. Greece responded in a positive way by renouncing its old territorial claim on southern Albania (north Epirus), but also voicing concern about the well-being of the Greek minority there.

Ethnic Greeks flee regularly from Albania and give a grim picture of oppression and denial of basic freedoms to the minority, particularly freedom of worship, so vital to Greeks. A recent Amnesty International report spoke of cruelty in Albanian prison camps.

Mr Papoulias suggested that Amnesty had to rely on the accounts of refugees which were not always accurate.

The minister, who was born on the Albanian side of the border, said he had met several

schoolmates from the Greek minority who held important posts in the administration. Officially, the Albanians estimate the Greek minority to number about 50,000, but Mr Papoulias's own guess was nearer 200,000 ethnic Greeks.

There was nothing Greece could do about the suppression of religion, he said. "Albania is the only officially atheistic country in the world and any interference would constitute an interference in their internal affairs."

Thanks to five agreements he signed during his visit, however, it would be possible to send experts from Greece to coach teachers for the minority schools; postal delivery of letters and parcels would be expedited; the main highway between the two countries, closed since 1940, would be reopened at Kakavia pass on January 1; and the Greeks in Albania would be able to telephone relatives in Greece.

What seems to be inducing the Greeks to give priority to closer political relations with Albania is their concern about developments in that country once its leader, Mr Enver Hoxha, aged 76, who has been at the helm for the past 40 years, goes.

They fear that because of tense relations with neighbouring Yugoslavia, his successors might turn to the Soviet Union for support. Greek officials believe this could destabilise not only the Balkans but the entire Mediterranean.

Military shake-up, page 9

Sri Lanka PM given security job

From Donovan Moldrich
Colombo

Sri Lanka's Prime Minister, Mr Ranasinghe Premadasa, was sworn in by President Jayawardene yesterday as Minister of Emergency Civil Administration, in addition to his other duties.

The new ministry will prepare and implement a plan to protect roads, bridges, electricity and water supplies and maintain essential services, including food, fuel, health and transport. Mr Premadasa said the Government was prepared to face any challenges to the unity of the state from Tamil separatists.

The Ministry of National Security yesterday announced that it was prepared to provide training in the use of firearms for licensed gun owners in Colombo.

On Wednesday, the Minister of Education, Youth Affairs and Employment, Mr Ranil Wickremasinghe, was entrusted with a new Ministry of Manpower Mobilization, which will draw up schemes for voluntary, or compulsory national service, depending on the needs of the armed forces.

A curfew was imposed from 11pm yesterday to 5am today in the predominantly Roman Catholic town of Negombo, 22 miles north of Colombo, in connection with the funeral of one of the army officers killed by Tamil rebels in the north-eastern district of Trincomalee on Wednesday.

Pope hits at totalitarian regimes

Rome (Reuter) - The Pope said in a peace message issued yesterday that totalitarian regimes and ideologies bear a great responsibility for the precarious nature of peace today.

In a 19-page message for the Roman Catholic Church's 18th World Day of Peace to be celebrated on January 1, the Pope said the world's present difficulties were a test for humanity.

The Pope addressed the message particularly to young people, but also to parents, teachers, those suffering from injustice and to political leaders, who he said "bear direct responsibility for the cause of peace".

The Pope said the world was faced with many threats of war. Without mentioning specific political ideologies or nations, he emphasised the responsibility of totalitarian regimes and ideologies in contributing to world instability.

"Such ultimate causes of conflict are to be found especially in the ideologies that have dominated our century and continue to do so, manifesting themselves in political, economic and social systems and taking control of the way people think."

"These ideologies are marked by a totalitarian attitude that disregards and oppresses the dignity and transcendent values of the human person and his or her rights."

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Combined Tumble Dryer and Automatic Washing Machine	
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Vote for Zia put at 98% but opponents doubt size of turnout

Islamabad (AP) - General Zia-ul-Haq has been elected President of Pakistan by more than 98 per cent of votes cast in a national referendum, the state-run Pakistan radio announced yesterday on the basis of preliminary results.

The broadcast said results showed that 64 per cent of 35 million registered voters took part in Wednesday's ballot despite a call for a boycott by clandestine opposition movements.

Opposition leaders claimed the referendum was rigged "on a vast scale" and said the real turnout was less than 5 per cent in some places.

With all opposition campaigning banned, General Zia asked voters to endorse him as President for a five-year term and to approve his programme for total Islamization of the laws and practices of Pakistan.

The polls closed 90 minutes later than planned on Wednesday to accommodate what the authorities said was an unprecedented last-minute rush. Reporters who toured polling stations in Islamabad and neighbouring Rawalpindi at that time found them almost deserted.

Pakistan radio said full results had been received early on Thursday from 32 electoral districts, about one-third of the total, and that more than 13 million votes had been counted. The National Election Commission said earlier that it would not announce results until the final count was completed on Saturday.

The Government news agency, the Associated Press of Pakistan, gave final results from many urban areas including Islamabad. It said the turnout in the capital was 53.4 per cent, with 76,046 of valid votes for General Zia and 2,123 against, a majority of 97.2 per cent.

● **CLAIMS QUERIED:** The Government claim of an overwhelming affirmative vote has been seriously questioned by all opposition (Hasan Akhtar writes).

Most acknowledged opposition parties had already called for a boycott. Three principal leaders of the eleven opposition party alliance, the Movement for Restoration of Democracy, have asserted that independent accounts of voting showed not more than 5 per cent turnout.

General Tikka Khan, a former Army Chief of Staff and the late Mr Bhutto's Defence Minister, yesterday accused the martial law administration of massive rigging to achieve an alleged record turnout in support of General Zia. General Tikka, acting Secretary-General of the late Mr Bhutto's People's Party said that the MRD had demanded that the chief election commissioner resign for failing to hold a fair referendum. He also asked General Zia to step down because, according to him, he had failed to win the vote and public confidence.

MRD leaders have called on people to observe protest meetings at prayers today.

Germans on Christmas alert for terrorists

From Michael Blayon Bonn

The West German Federal public prosecutor has told people to be on their guard over Christmas and report any suspicious activities after the claim by the underground Red Army Faction that it was responsible for the attempted bombing of a Nato training school in Oberammergau.

General Kurt Reimann said about 15 wanted ringleaders of the faction, formerly known as the Baader-Meinhof gang, were still at large, and were equipped with weapons and money. He asked the public to tell the police of any unusual attempts to rent flats, hire warehouses or keep watch on people.

On Tuesday police defused a 55lb bomb in the boot of a car outside the Nato training centre. A young man was seen running off after parking the car, which had American licence plates stolen from another car. Yesterday a woman caller told a Munich newspaper that the Red Army Faction had planned the bomb, which failed to explode because of a defective time-fuse.

Police suspect that the attack, the first for some years by the once-powerful terrorist group, might be linked to a hunger strike by imprisoned Red Army Faction leaders. Some 35 suspected terrorists have joined in the protest begun in Stammheim top security prison on December 4. They are fasting to back a demand that they should all be grouped together.

Police announced yesterday that the explosives found in the car on Tuesday originated in Belgium.



Minister's plea: Herr Genscher (centre) emerging from the West German Embassy in Prague after his appeal to the East German refugees.

Genscher asks Prague refugees to quit

From Our Own Correspondent, Bonn

Herr Hans-Dietrich Genscher, the West German Foreign Minister, yesterday urged the 63 East German refugees in the West German Embassy in Prague to return home, saying this was the only way they could get exit visas to the West.

Meeting the would-be emigrants, including the 40 who are on hunger strike, at the end of his three-day visit to Czechoslovakia, Herr Genscher assured them that East Berlin had promised not to punish those who returned home. But he said Bonn had been unable to obtain any guarantee that they would be allowed to leave.

Bonn has already twice sent Herr Ludwig Rehlinger, the official who has been conducting the arduous negotiations with East Berlin, to Prague to urge the refugees to leave. But Herr Heinrich Windelen, the Minister for Intra-German Affairs, said a hard core were holding out. In a newspaper interview through the railings of the Prague embassy garden

Georgia's Stalin cult Home town reveres its favourite son

From Richard Owen, Gori, Soviet Georgia

It begins in Tbilisi, where Stalin stares out stonily from a frieze high on the Party History Institute on Rustaveli Avenue, and gazes in full generalissimo's uniform from an oil painting in the savings bank next door.

There is a Stalin Enbankment, a Stalin Bridge, even a Stalin Park, an appropriately joyless place set high above the town and reached by a rickety funicular railway. Every Georgian lorry driver's cab, every shop, has its photograph of Georgia's most famous son, revered in his homeland as he is reviled elsewhere.

The Stalin cult reaches a crescendo in Gori, two hours' drive away. Here Stalin stands outside the town hall on the main square, in the place normally reserved for Lenin. The one-roomed hut in which Stalin - then Josef Dzhugashvili - was born is preserved as a shrine, its sparseness emphasising the humble origins of the shepherd's son who rose to become dictator.

Nearby is the grandiose Stalin Museum, founded in two modest rooms in 1939 but expanded in 1958 in defiance of Khrushchev's destalinization campaign. Inside, light pours through blue and yellow glass on to white marble statues of Stalin as a young revolutionary and as a war leader, and room after room of photographs depict his career in sanitized terms.

Guides speak reverently of a man who proclaimed his modesty to Tbilisi workers at a 1926 meeting, who later remarked: "As for me, I am only Lenin's pupil", and who in 1938 ordered a book about his childhood to be burned because it was "too grovelling".

There is no mention that in the 1930s Stalin also ordered the deaths of millions of people in the purges and enforced collectivization of agriculture. Trotsky, Bukharin and other prominent victims have literally been erased from the photographs as they were extinguished in life.

The museum emphasises Stalin's genius as a wartime commander, and all visitors over 50 react with emotion to the sound of Stalin's disembodied voice delivering his 1941 rallying call to the nation. In the tomb-like chill of the final room Stalin's death mask lies on a marble plinth sunk in the floor, surrounded by white columns. A painting of his lying-in-state hangs on the wall.

Not all Georgians admire Stalin, whose terror struck down the Georgian intelligentsia as well. "He was capricious and cruel", one Tbilisi resident said. "But he led us against Hitler, and left the Soviet Union more powerful than ever."

The forthcoming 40th anniversary of the end of the Second World War has given impetus to a campaign all over the Soviet Union to rehabilitate Stalin, at least partially.

All Russians have mixed feelings about him, and very few would go along with the view presented at Gori. On the other hand, the museum is expecting huge numbers from all over the country to come to Gori to mark Stalin's 105th birthday today; not perhaps the 45,000 who came for the centenary, but enough to confirm the new interest in a man who for years has been almost unmentionable.

In recent months Stalin has been increasingly discussed or mentioned in the Soviet media. Television has shown him in his white marshal's uniform at Yalta and Potsdam, and addressing the nation at the outbreak of war, when he spoke of "brothers and sisters" instead of "comrades", and appealed to history and religion rather than Marx and Lenin.

The new film, *Marshall Zhukov*, depicts a Stalin who was often indecisive or arbitrary, but who was also often firm, intelligent and wise. Even Stalin's role in the revolution is under discussion, with a re-emergence of the (false) suggestion that Stalin was prominent in 1917 and always backed Lenin.

The Gori museum intends to expand still further for next May's Victory Day celebrations, with sections on Stalin and his generals (avoiding his slaughter of Red Army officers), and one on Stalin's family, including his son, Yakov, who died a German captive in 1943. The news that Svetlana, Stalin's errand daughter, might live in Tbilisi rather than Moscow stirred local pride.

At a wine cellar in Tbilisi, the mustachioed shopkeeper pulled back a curtain to reveal a private collection of Stalin photos and mementoes. "I shall be drinking his health on Friday", he said with a broad smile, raising an earthenware bowl of Kakhetian wine. "Here's to a true son of Georgia."

Mintoff visit cements Malta's Moscow links

From Our Own Correspondent, Moscow

Mr Dom Mintoff, the Prime Minister of Malta, left Moscow yesterday after four days of talks which set the seal of close ties between Malta and the Soviet Union, and confirmed Malta's role in Russia's strategy for gaining influence on the Mediterranean.

Mr Mintoff was given a red carpet send-off to match his red carpet welcome on Monday. At Moscow airport for his departure were Mr Nikolai Tikhonov, the Prime Minister, and Mr Andrei Gromyko, the Foreign Minister, both of whom had held talks with Mr Mintoff during the visit.

The highlight of the trip was Mr Mintoff's meeting on Wednesday with President Chernenko, who used the occasion to underline Moscow's desire for East-West détente.

A statement on the talks said the two sides had agreed on the need to ban nuclear-capable ships from the Mediterranean, and that no nuclear weapons should be allowed on the territory of non-nuclear powers in the area.

Diplomats have speculated that Malta may sign a treaty of friendship with Moscow, and may support the Soviet view that Spain's membership of Nato upsets the political balance in the Mediterranean, even though Spain is not yet fully integrated into the Nato military structure.

Malta may now be hoping for greater Soviet investment in the island, including orders for Malta's shipbuilding industry.

Mr Mintoff: Received red carpet treatment.

and co-operation". It also called for the extension of military confidence-building measures to the region, a "co-ordinated reduction of armed forces" in the region.

The communiqué proposed a commitment by the nuclear powers, including the Soviet Union, "not to use nuclear weapons against any Mediterranean country which does not allow nuclear weapons on its territory."

Mr Tikhonov accepted an invitation to visit Malta, but no date has been agreed.

Police return all but two of ITN's cassettes

Johannesburg. - The South African security Police yesterday returned all but two of the 33 video cassettes they seized on Wednesday in a raid on the office here of ITN (Michael Hornsby writes).

A spokesman for ITN said that one of the cassettes still held by police contained an interview with Mrs Ela Ramgobin, the granddaughter of Mahatma Gandhi and a senior member of the Natal Indian Congress, a radical opposition group.

Mrs Ramgobin's husband, News, is one of eight United Democratic Front and Natal Indian Congress members charged with treason. It is thought the raid on the ITN office may have been to collect evidence that could be used at a treason trial expected in the new year.



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John Percival



Classic Oxford Street (Dec 28)

As presented in the film, Kolb's father, Herr Lautenschlag, has a distinguished but undistinguished post as royal garden architect. His wife is a French lady who gives music lessons and has inherited somewhat precarious mental health from her own mother. Annette - who capriciously adopts boys' clothes and the name of Matthias - is the youngest and most adventurous children. The disorganized and irresponsible home life of the Lautenschlags is in striking contrast to their neighbours, a snobbish family ruled with Prussian discipline by its head, Dr. von Zwinger.

Fassbinder's whirlwind life and early death three years ago at 36 inevitably fascinate his contemporaries. He has already been the subject of two documentaries as well as innumerable articles and

commits suicide - the first of several victims of that urge to destruction of himself and others that goes with Eva's creative gifts. (In real life too Fassbinder

It is probably enough for an production of *The Magic Flute* that it can provide a suitable home for the opera's events and persons, but Mr Vick goes further. His version is filled with telling character points, so that even Monostatos is granted interest and dignity, and the monster, here, a minotaur of the heels of Tamino-Theseus.

But Mr. Vick's most provocative twist is reserved for the end. Pamina rushes from Tamino; he breaks his magic flute and regains her. Together they come forward away from the temple towards an unknown future.

Paul Griffiths

Equally horrific is the sight of an alienated family sitting blank-faced round a television set and turning the volume up to drown the cries of an unwanted child. Or the dreadful, unstoppable family

'IT WAS BRILLIANT'
Sue
TIME ST
of

Irving Wardle

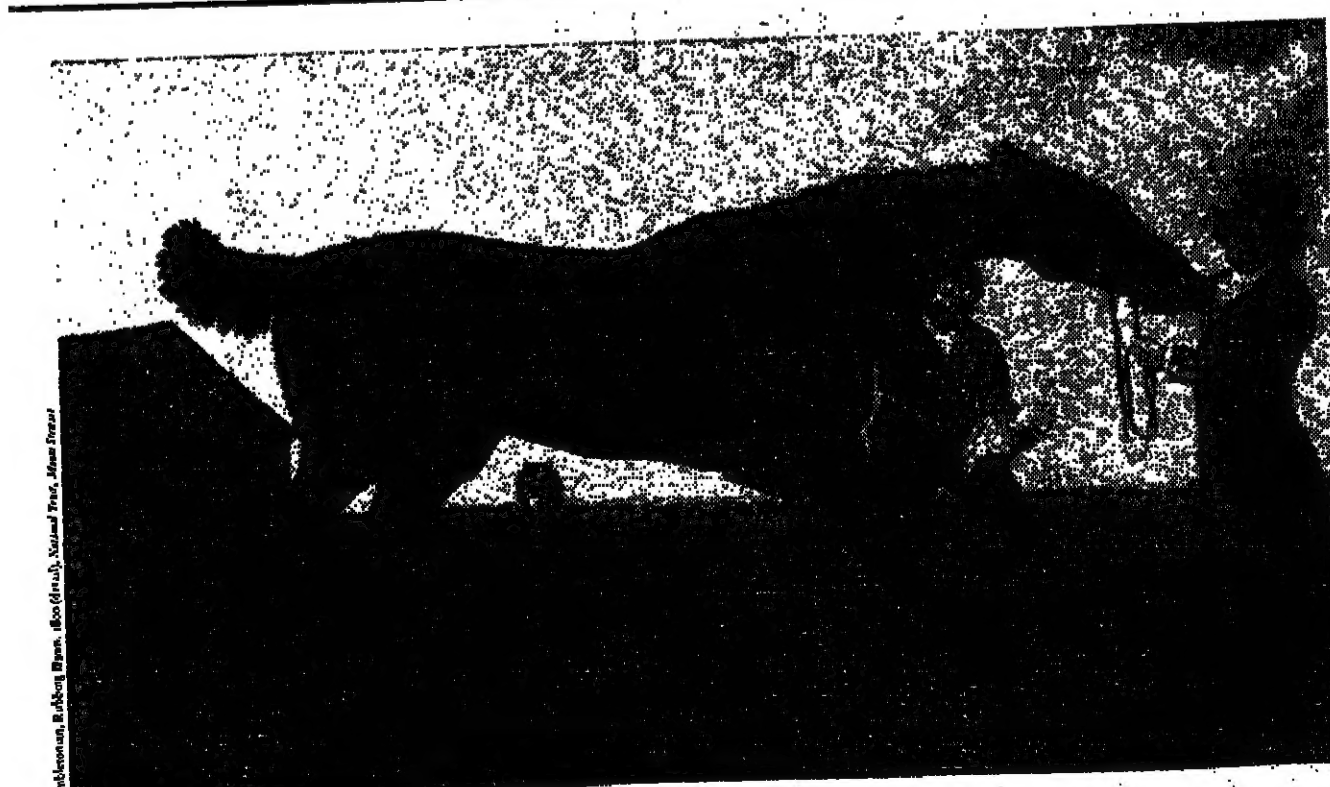
taken through the trauma of the dog's urinary habits. And there are some people who need group therapy to adjust to the deaths of their pets. This lavishing attention is not always successful on the patients themselves: in one morbid sequence, a parrot died as it was being passed from hand to hand. Perhaps the financial cost of the treatment was preying on its mind.

Peter Ackroyd

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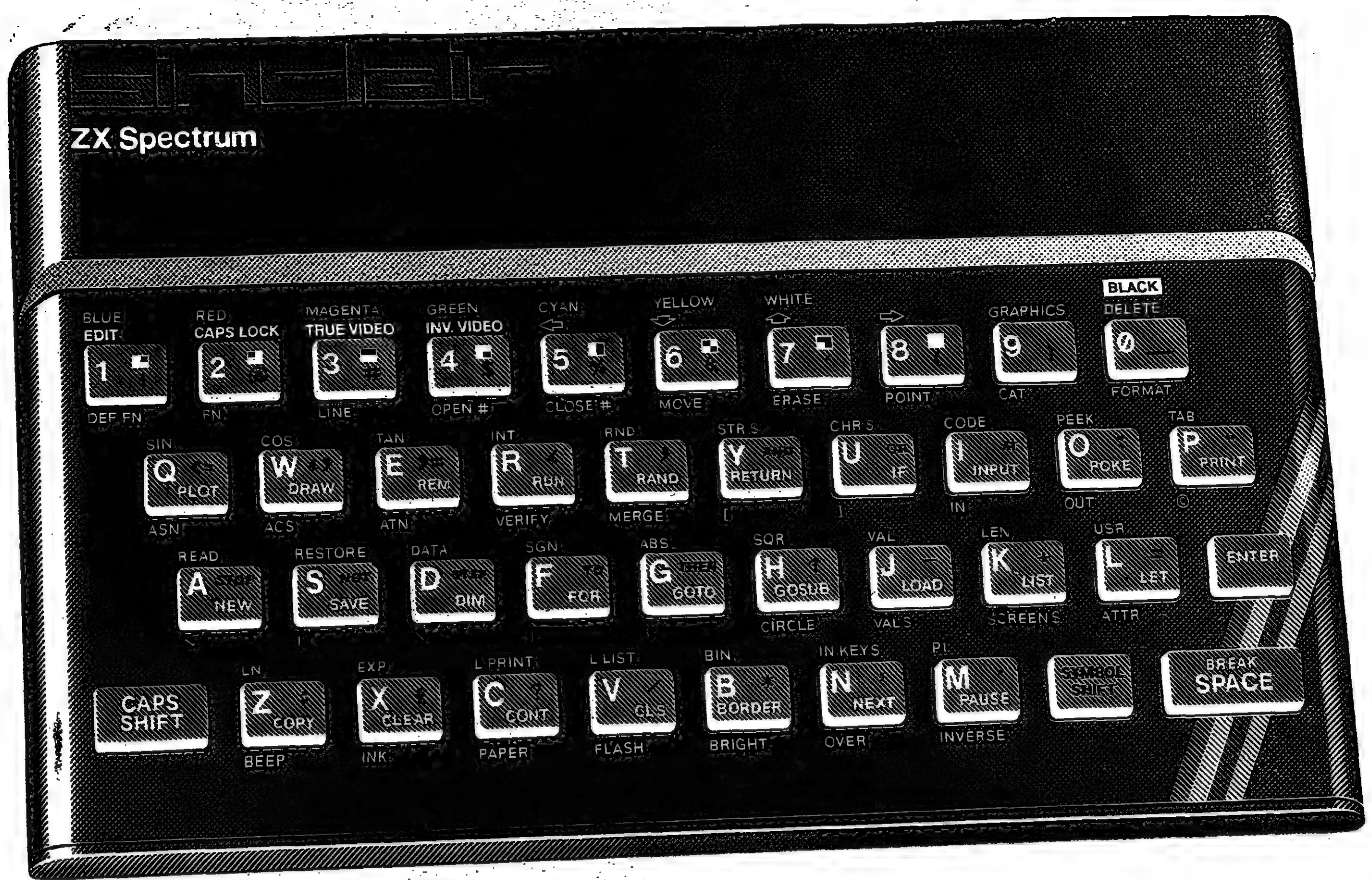
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SPECTRUM

Turning dishonesty into an art form

The art market is plagued by dishonest practices. The reason is simple. Most people don't understand art, know the difference between good, better and best or have the remotest idea about prices. The man in the street cannot distinguish between a £5 or a £5,000 drawing.

It is not a matter of education because no work of art has a clearly-defined value. The price paid is dictated by who is selling to whom. A furniture expert cannot value pictures, a silver expert cannot value furniture, and neither knows the value of pottery or glass.

With enormous sums of money thus resting on highly-specialized expertise, the opportunities for misrep-

resentation and misinformation are large and tempting. In Britain a long-standing battle by upright and honourable antique dealers to establish an honest market still fails to outlaw the manipulation of art auctions by dealers' rings.

Meanwhile, as revealed in today's news pages, the temptation to smuggle ancient Chinese pottery and bronzes, recovered from newly-discovered burial sites, offers monetary returns to cash-starved peasants which it would be humanly impossible to resist.

Geraldine Norman explains how this China trade began and is now flooding into our major auction houses.

"If they read my name in your newspaper in Macao they will kill me", said the Chinese connoisseur pointing two fingers graphically at his temples. Art smuggling out of China is an explosive issue about which little is yet known. Connoisseurs east and west only talk about it reluctantly and demand a guarantee that they will remain anonymous.

It had been going on for about four years with most material coming out via Macao to Hong Kong. Extraordinary stories are told of the man who pioneered the new "China trade", a Macao resident who gave lodging to homeless refugees from China - who gave him things. He began dealing in Chinese coins but moved on to ancient pottery and began to organize his residents into regular suppliers.

At one time queues would form outside his door when a shipment was expected. He could be relatively open in his business since he had bought protection from the Macao police. The last year, however, has seen an upsurge of police harassment in Macao and he has moved to Hong Kong and retired from business. He has a 30-foot yacht and a summer house in Bangkok. He is said to have made over £10 million in four years, having started with a capital of only £1,000.

This unnamed pioneer of the trade was quickly followed by others and there are now said to be 40 or 50 dealers involved.

Gangsters have come into the trade organizing shipments to Hong Kong by air and speedboat

The standard price for smuggling a suitcase of antiquities out of China is around £1,000 but the Communists are becoming tougher. They are said to have caught 50 people in Canton three months ago. "The ones who were shot all stole from museums", I was assured. "In China museums do not have security guards. It is easy."

A smattering of big-time gangsters are said to have recently come into the trade capable of organizing shipments to Hong Kong by air or speedboat. To justify the cost, these smugglers have to be much more selective than they used to be, concentrating only

The following are major Chinese art works that are said to have come out of China within the last four years. Sotheby's and Christie's will not comment on their place of origin: Sotheby's, New York, June 15, 1983: Lot 157, glazed pottery goose-form tureen, Tang, \$275,000. Lot 164, glazed pottery mermaid-form ewer, Tang, \$115,500. Sotheby's, London, December 13, 1983: Lot 10, three-handled archaic bronze vessel, c. 1,000 BC, £52,500. Christie's, London, December 14, 1983: Lot 94, archaic bronze cauldron, Shang, £51,840. Sotheby's, London, December 11, 1984: Lot 17, chime of nine archaic bronze bells and ten musical stones, Warring States, unsold at £30,000.

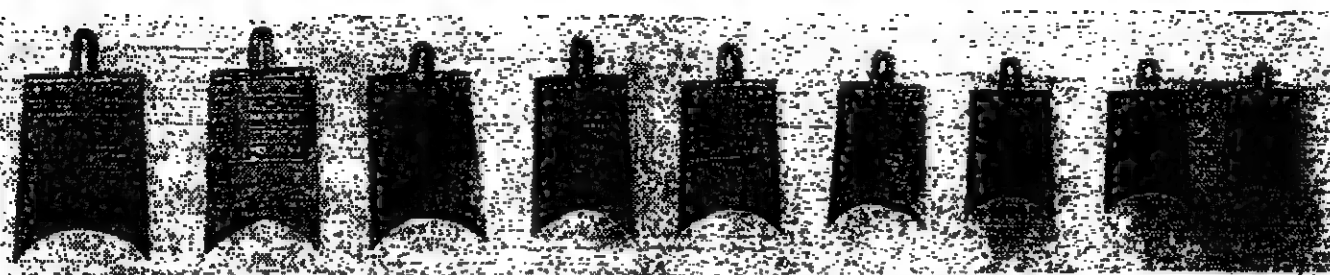
on items of high quality and value.

Sotheby's and Christie's finely illustrated catalogues are used as the basic reference books for selecting what ought to be valuable, but traders with untrained eyes often get it wrong and fakes are beginning to be made to deceive them. Replicas of ancient pottery and bronzes are already for sale in Government tourist shops up and down China. These are made to look old by corroding the surface with acid and rubbing in some mud for sale to the smugglers.

Western dealers have noticed that different types of objects have become suddenly available in quantity in London or New York auctions at different times, reflecting the development of new sources of supply. The first wave was of late Ming blue and white wares. Then came Tang pottery, followed by Han and Song and, most recently, bronzes including rare gilt-bronzes of the Tang dynasty over the last month.

The explanation is that they come from different burial sites. The Chinese have been burying their dead for several thousand years and up to around 1600 a supply of pottery accoutrements for the afterlife was buried with them. The great tombs of the Tang dynasty, with their pottery horses, camels, musicians and women are among the major tourist attractions of China today.

In the push to modernise China new construction projects are constantly unearthing forgotten tombs. These are supposed to be reported to the authorities and their contents removed to a local warehouse. Thefts from such warehouses, possibly assisted or condoned by



Lots of fear: Experts worried that these ancient Chinese bells would be demanded back by Peking



Above: An unusually large and rare gilt bronze figure of Guanyin from the Tang Dynasty, sold by Sotheby's in New York for \$47,300. The auctioneers point out the intricate carving



Above: A gilt bronze reliquary and cover from the Early Tang Dynasty, which sold for £73,440 at Christie's

Left: Also from the Tang Dynasty, a large Sannai-glazed pottery jar which made \$484,000 at Sotheby's in New York last year

How the ring works and why it survives



In October 1983 the President of the British Antique Dealers' Association, a Belgian silver dealer called Brand Ingils, wrote a round robin to all of his 430 or so members. "Since taking office I have had to make certain enquiries about the extent to which an auction ring and subsequent 'knockout' operates in this country," he wrote. "I have been absolutely appalled at some of the stories I have heard and it would appear that in some instances I may have to take some very definite and positive action."

Ingils reminded his members that rings were against the law as well as the Association's rules and ended up with the instruction that "any member who feels he is unable to conduct his business without the benefit of these activities should resign". No one resigned. But an informed guessmate provided by a member recently puts the proportion of BADA's members who treat rings as a normal part of their business at around 40 per cent.

When Ingils got no response to his round robin, he took the initiative and had "a quiet chat", as he put it, with three dealers. One of them is no longer a member of the association. Nothing will draw Ingils on whether the dealer resigned or was pushed. When

asked, a look of acute distress comes over his face. "It's a very delicate business, you know," he points out. It is not unknown for a dealer to counter the suggestion that he should leave BADA with a threat to sue for defamation of character. The Association has a lively terror of writs.

It has been the "goodies" who have resigned so far. The President's letter followed the resignation of Richard Chester-Master, a respected Cirencester furniture dealer, in protest at the involvement of BADA members in the auction rings operating in his area.

Last week John Partridge followed him out of BADA. He is the grandest of the bunch, running the family firm of Partridge Fine Art in Bond Street. It has one gallery which he calls "our million dollar room" and it's not worth any client looking in there unless he's prepared to spend that kind of money.

It was Partridge's complaint over the sale of a walnut bookcase at a country auction last June that sparked a BADA enquiry which was reported in *The Times* two weeks ago. A number of dealers who attended the sale were cleared of any involvement in an auction ring.

The *Times*' article has brought the long-running argument about the pros and cons of auction rings into the open again and stirred passions. Not that the victims are standing up

to shout about it. They rarely even realize they have been cheated. But the trade is fiercely arguing whether there should be a law against rings, whether and how the present law needs amendment and whether there's anything much to censure if it's broken.

A ring is an agreement between dealers not to bid against each other at an auction so that they can buy cheaply. They then hold a secondary auction, or "knockout", and divide the proceeds between themselves. In standard ring terminology this is known as "settlement". Dealers will tell you "I don't settle" or "I don't see anything much against settlement".

The dealers will usually be specialists in furniture, pictures, silver, carpets and so on, and have a better knowledge of prices in their field than the auctioneer. It is not unknown for the auctioneer to be a party to the ring himself.

To be effective the ring must include all the strongest bidders at a sale. When colleagues refuse to settle the ring is often prepared to bid prices up against them to quite unbecomingly levels. They are occasionally landed with an unsaleable expensive piece but it is a small price to pay for freeing out the opposition. Dealers who consistently oppose the ring have been known to find their goods sabotaged by the time they come to pick them up or to find their car tyres slashed after leaving a sale.

There are specialist rings and rings that operate in different parts of the country. The Midlands and the border country are said to be particularly strongly organized. In

Ireland, where there no legislation outlawing such practices, it is almost impossible for a dealer to buy at an auction without coming to an understanding with the local ring.

The smart London dealers who settle generally maintain contacts with the organizers of local rings and come in with the local ring when there is a country sale worth travelling to.

At major London sales there are generally so many foreign dealers and private collectors that a ring is almost impossible to operate except, perhaps, on a few special lots. But they operate regularly at lesser auctions in London and the country and in certain specialized areas. Carpets and jewel-rings are notorious.

The effect of a ring is to defraud the vendor who has sent goods to the auction to be sold at their full value. The art and antiques market, however, is not a place where goods have very clearly defined values so it is debatable how seriously the impact of rings should be taken in the areas.

That they are illegal is not debatable. They were outlawed by the Auctions (Bidding Agreements) Act of 1927 as follows: "If a dealer agrees to give or give or offers any gift or consideration to any other person as an inducement or reward for abstaining, or from having abstained, from bidding at a sale by auction... he shall be guilty of an offence under this Act..." A special provision was made to exclude from the net joint account bidding (dealers clubbing together to buy in partnership) provided a copy of the agreement was lodged with the auctioneer before the sale. This has caused special confusion, as we shall see.

There was no successful conviction under the act until 1981 and there have been only two little ones since. But there have been three significant rows in the postwar years.

The first was sparked by a *Sunday Times* coup in 1964. After the sale of the effects of Captain E G Spencer-Churchill at Northwick Park, Gloucestershire, a furniture knockout was held at the Swan Inn in Moreton-in-the-Marsh. The *Sunday Times* had a friend there with a microphone on his sleeve connected to a pocket transmitter. The row rumbled and escalated for several weeks ending with the resignation of the president of BADA and 13 council members who had all had some involvement.

An interim government took over until the next council election a year later at which most of the dealers who had resigned were re-elected. One or two "goodies" then resigned but mostly it was business as usual.

The next row was in 1969 over a Duccio "Madonna" bought in the country by the picture ring at £2,700 and resold to the National Gallery at £140,000. For a variety of technical reasons no conviction could be brought but Parliament took a hand to see that the impediments should be removed for the future and an amended Auctions (Bidding Agreements) Act 1969 was passed.

In 1981 three leading international dealers, Agnew's of Bond Street, Thaw of New York and Artisans of Luxembourg (and London) were prosecuted for buying an Agnelli bust at a country auction in a partnership that had not been disclosed to the auctioneer. They paid £165,000 and resold the bust to the Metropolitan Museum for £265,000. This was a test case of whether the law could distinguish between the respectable - as in this case - practice of buying in partnership, and in a ring.

A Bow Street magistrate found the three dealers not guilty and there was no appeal to a higher court. Since when the trade has been in a complete muddle over whether joint bidding agreements must be disclosed to auctioneers before a sale, as the 1927 Act appears to suggest, but as the Agnelli case had seemed to refute.

In contrast it was small fry that were caught when the first successful prosecution was brought in 1981. Captain Peter Francis, who runs a family auctioneering firm in Carmarthen, became so incensed at the activities of the ring at his monthly sales that he called in the police.



The saleroom is directly across the road from the Ivy Bush Hotel, the smartest in town. The dealers were in the habit of crossing the road after the sale and holding their knockout in the bar. Since vendors who had come to the auction to see Aunt Agatha's whatnots also dropped in for a drink after the sale, Captain Francis was getting a lot of complaints. The police bugged the bar, dressed up a cop as a waiter and caught the dealers at it. They were taken to court, fined £500 each plus £1,000 costs and forbidden to attend auctions for six months.

The policeman who had masterminded it was Chief Inspector Donald Evans. Two years later he accepted a job as a sergeant on his way home to allow a line of cars to go by. Some of the cars had furniture strapped to the roof and he recognized one or two faces. He followed the convoy to a beach, where a knockout took place and managed to run down enough colleagues to the spot to arrest the leaders before it had finished. The fines were again £500 each, with £300 costs.

An active dealer can make £1,000 a week or more out of the ring.

The Auctions (Bidding Agreements) Act is not taken seriously. Those who settle are not considered crooks or even particularly dishonest by their colleagues, though there are some resolutely upright dealers who won't do it.

Some dealers argue that it should be left up to auctioneers to see that their vendors are not cheated and that the law should be changed in this direction. Most shrug and point out that you can't expect friends not to get together. If one method of manipulating auction prices to their advantage is ruled out, they'll just find another.

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Dessert... Berries
To Drink... Dirty Water
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Registered Charity No. 212810. Cheques to: Y Care International (Africa Famine)

The unexpected conquest of Georgia

moreover... Miles Kingdon

Today - Part Two of our thrilling complete novel from Mills and Bantam: *Falkland Passion* by Venetia Barnstaple

(Story so far, Georgia has broken off her affair with Terry because he seems to like boats more than her. The final straw comes when he decides to sail round the world. To forget him, Georgia takes a job as secretary with Captain Dick Bolsover, supplies chief on the Falkland Islands. She and Dick are attracted to each other as Christmas draws near... now read on.)

Chapter Four
"I'd rather be living in Argentina than marching around for Sergeant Tina!"

The soldiers' song in the street outside floated up to the window of the room in downtown Port Stanley where Captain Bolsover and Georgia were working on the final details of the Christmas catering.

"Who's Sergeant Tina, Dick?" said Georgia.

"What? Oh, that's Sergeant Duckworth."

"And why do they call him that?"

"Hard to say, really. Perhaps because the sergeant likes dressing up in frocks on his night off."

"You're on!" said Dick. "By the way, don't forget that tomorrow night is the officers' Christmas party. You're my guest."

Chapter Five
Port Stanley was all decked for Christmas. They had strung one streamer across the main street. Georgia had gone window shopping and was wondering whether Dick Bolsover would like a hand grenade or some barbed wire cutters in his stocking.

Chapter Six
"Hark, the herald angels sing 'Tis Christmas, as arranged by Blag..." the soldiers sang. Dick Bolsover smiled at Georgia.

"Having a good time, Georgia? Forgotten about Terry now?"

Georgia, emboldened by a glass of sparkling Argentine white wine, smiled back, though she couldn't help wondering how far Terry had got on his round-the-world trip.

"Come outside, Georgia," said Dick thickly. "There's something I have to ask you."

Outside, the rain was falling harder than ever. Georgia suddenly realized, horrified, that Dick had put his arms round her.

"I love you," said Dick hoarsely. "I want to make my own conquest of Georgia!"

She shrank away, aghast. How could she have felt warm towards this man? Would no one rescue her? Suddenly, out of nowhere, came a form, a yellow oilies and green boots. It was, unbelievably, Terry. He dispatched Di Bolsover with one look to the jaw and took Georgia in his arms.

"My darling," he said, "this is my first landfall on my voyage round the world, and I fancy I have come just in time. I stopped for supplies and I found - you! Would you care to fill my extra berth?"

"I certainly would," said Georgia. "And while I'm at it, I'd like to rearrange the furniture on your boat and get it painted a nicer colour."

If Terry had taken the hint, he would have gone on without her, but he didn't and that's another story.

CONCISE CROSSWORD (No 527)

ACROSS
1 Split in three (9)
5 Intarwine (6)
9 Powerful bird (3)
10 Muslim spirit (6)
11 Building extension (6)
12 Veal (4)
13 Better (8)
14 Indian court (6)
17 Felt hat (6)
19 Roughness (8)
22 Wild party (4)
24 Clock (6)
25 Prophet (6)
26 Taro dish (3)
27 Post Tudor dynasty (6)
28 Coat with flour (6)

DOWN
2 Lift (5)
3 Admiral's group (3,4)
4 Crockery cupboard (7)
5 Head skin (5)
6 Solitary person (5)
7 Cockerel's crest (7)
13 Aural organ (3)
15 Pilewort (7)
16 Simple tune (3)
17 Neck gland (7)

SOLUTION to No 526
ACROSS: 8 Antiochian 9 Log 10 Scapa Flow 11 Video 13 Allowed 16 Spouses 19 Regal 22 Hatchback 24 Zip 25 Semi-permeable
DOWN: 1 Pavlov 2 Staged 3 Scissors 4 Malaysia 5 Puma 6 Calf 7 Stewed 12 Imp 14 Lark 15 EVA 16 Schuss 17 Optima 18 Slurry 20 Czebo 21 Lapped 23 Hope



At Christmas the tradition is of course Roast Turkey, but many choose Goose, Chicken, Duck, Beef or Game. Whatever the fayne, hot or cold, drink a delicious Rioja wine, a velvety red or a dry fruity white. Don't forget those working in the kitchen! A glass of Rioja whilst preparing the family feast is always appreciated. Explore the wonderful wines of Rioja and find a quality and value that is unequalled.

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FRIDAY PAGE

Godparents are still a blessing

As Prince Henry is baptized today, Barbara Toner finds out whether this popular tradition is still relevant or just a source of birthday treats

Prince Henry of Wales will be christened in St George's Chapel, Windsor, today. He will have six godparents: Prince Andrew, his uncle; Lady Sarah Armstrong-Jones, his father's first cousin; Bryan Organ, a portrait painter; Lady Vestey, a family friend; Gerald Ward, a family friend; and Mrs William Bartholomew, the former Carolyn Pride, one of his mother's closest chums.

They will gather round the font with his parents and they will be told it is their duty to bring up the child to fight against evil and to follow Christ. They will be asked to say, on behalf of themselves and the Prince, repent of their sins and renounce evil. It would be an awful turn-up for the books if any of them said they wouldn't.

They won't disappoint, of course. Even atheist godparents cross their fingers behind their backs and utter the required responses. They do it for love of the parents and the child and because it is an honour to be asked.

Having promised to take a prominent part in the moral and spiritual welfare of the baby, however, many godparents promptly turn their backs and walk out of its life for ever.

This doesn't seem to have anything to do with their faith, or lack of it, but rather to a feeling that there is no significant role for them to play and

certainly no real responsibility. No one seriously expects godparents to cart other people's children off to church should the parents neglect to do so or to instruct them in the doctrine that led them to the christening in the first place.

But what should they do? What should royal godparents do? A Buckingham Palace spokesman remarked rather sniffily that the duties of royal godparents are no different from the duties of other godparents, which is the opposite of enlightenment.

Prince Charles had eight, all of whom were royal or very closely connected and several of whom died almost immediately.

'They should provide help through prayers, example and teaching'

ately, The youngest godparent was Princess Margaret but two of them were great-grandmothers.

There is no record of any of them "doing" anything of great significance in his life, except Queen Mary, who wrote in her diary: "I have given the baby a silver-gilt cup and cover which George III gave to a godson in 1780, so I gave a present from my great-grandfather to my great-grandson 168 years later."

There aren't many godparents who could write that.

Godparents' original function was to vouch for the good character and sincerity of the person being received into the Church in the days when the Church was a secret society.

The function now ranges from the merely decorative, via the wonderfully sympathetic, to the economically sound. Very rich or foreign godparents are a useful channel for laundering money which will pay school fees.

The views of the churches seem only loosely connected to the views of their flocks. While all concerned agree that godparents should be decent people who will show an interest in the child, the flocks are inclined to favour a temporal interest over a spiritual one.

The Church of England asks that godparents, along with parents, provide children with help and encouragement through their prayers, their example and their teaching.

According to the Rev Richard Charters, vicar of St Stephen's, Rochester Row, who was among those attending at Prince William's christening, there is an ideal godparent: "It should be an adult who is detached but accessible, not someone the child identifies too closely with his parents, but someone who has remained in contact and who will be there when parents are the last people a child can turn to."

Practising members of the Church of England may well go along with the ideal but when it comes to making a choice they will take into account a wide range of non-religious details, as well as Aunt Polly's claim.

Shaunagh and Thomas Heneghe have two small children who between them have nine godparents. This is to allow for the huge fall-out factor.

The Heneghes have a clear idea of their responsibilities: "The first is to remember Christmas and birthdays and the second is to be around when the godchild is a teenager so that they can have a shoulder to cry on."

This is in line with the Church's view and indeed the Heneghe children are being brought up as the Church would have it. They say their prayers nightly and they attend church regularly.

Shaunagh Heneghe does not, however, approve of relatives being godparents. "They are going to give presents anyway," she points out. "I think that each child should have two older and two younger because the older ones tend to die off, and I think at least one should live abroad, for holidays."

"It's fortuitous if the people you have a right to approach for favours when it comes to jobs or whatever."

"It is also lucky if they happen to be rich but I can't see any point in asking one of those middle-aged friends who has 35 others because yours will get overlooked."

Parents will perhaps inevi-



The Prince and Princess of Wales with Prince William and Prince Henry

"A godparent should also be able to talk about Jesus Christ without embarrassment because that will be necessary when the Sunday school platitudes stop working. Of course, I know many people choose Aunt Polly because she would be terribly hurt if they didn't."

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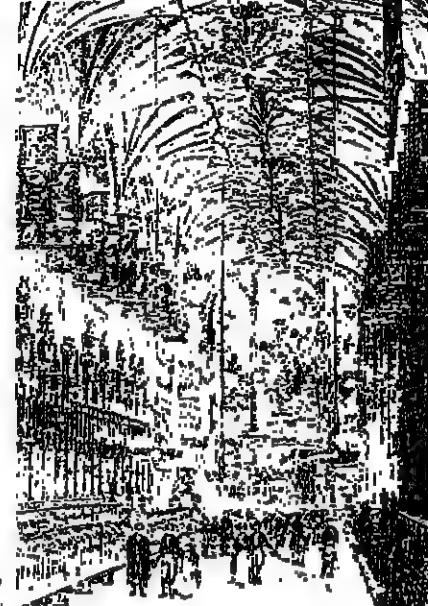
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'Originally their function was to vouch for the good character and sincerity of the person being received into the Church in the days when it was a secret society'

St George's Chapel, Windsor, right



VOWS ANCIENT AND MODERN

The Church of England sets out the traditional duties of godfathers and godmothers in the Book of Common Prayer:

It has several versions but at a private baptism of infants it is as follows:

"Forasmuch as this child has promised by you, his sponsors, to renounce the Devil and all his works, to believe in God, and to serve him; you must remember, that it is your parts and duties to see that this infant be taught, so soon as he shall be able to learn, what a solemn vow, promise and profession he hath made by you."

"And that he may know these things the better, you shall call upon him, to hear sermons; and chiefly you shall provide, that he may learn the Creed, the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments, and all other things which a Christian ought to know and believe to his soul's health; and that this child may be virtuously brought up to lead a godly and a Christian life..."

The increasingly popular, modern version asks only that the child be helped and encouraged.

Parents and godparents are asked jointly: "Are you willing to give it to them by your prayers, by your example, and by your teaching?"

Since the Vatican Council of 1969 godparents at a Catholic baptism are addressed along with parents: "On your part, you must make it your constant care to bring him up in the practice of the faith. See that the divine life which God gives him is kept safe from the poison of sin, to grow always stronger in his heart."

"If your faith makes you ready to accept this responsibility, renew now the vows of your own baptism. Reject sin; profess your faith in Christ Jesus."

"This is the faith of the Church. This is the faith in which this child is about to be baptized."

The Methodist Handbook on Infant Baptism states: "It is the privilege and responsibility of the sponsors to support the parents in the Christian upbringing of the children; to help them carry out the promises and so to act as a link between the family and the larger family of the Church; and regularly to pray for the children."

Their involvement in the ceremony is brief.

They are asked: "Will you, who have consented to these parents, help them in the Christian upbringing of this child?"

They are expected to reply: "With God's help we will."

that is as much as you can expect. It's rude to expect someone to be interested in their spiritual welfare."

The Methodists have sponsors as an option and they also stress the secondary nature of their role. It is simply supportive. But the Rev Trevor Rowe, general secretary of the Division of Ministries, concedes that in practice, the amount of support provided varies greatly.

He says: "Ideally, there should be a lot but sponsors can never take the place of actual parents." He gives pre-baptismal counselling to parents and he asks them whether they are having sponsors because they are decorative or because they genuinely want their support.

"Without wishing to sound too critical," he ventures, "I think it can be just a formality in the Church of England and that is something we don't want to inherit."

Caroline Blacker, daughter of Lord Soper, so a member of one of Britain's leading Nonconformist families, chose not to have sponsors because she and her husband Terence saw no point in them: "They don't do the bringing-up."

The Blackers are not themselves practising Methodists but they wanted their children to be christened so that when they come to make their own choices they will be doing so from inside rather than outside a faith. This personal view would not receive much staunch support from the Church.

Whether it's a formality or not, there is no denying that certain people make popular candidates.

These are not, as a rule, the most apparently worthy, but generally in their middle years, childless and materially successful.

The pagan godfather of the Chances' middle daughter likes to make his godchildren's

dreams come true. He writes their names in a gold diary and lays down a bottle of expensive wine for every one of them on her birthday. He once hired an old French bus to take all 15 of them to the theatre, serving cocktails on the way.

Gill Stribling-Wright, a television producer in her late thirties, has seven godchildren and sees her role as "sort of keeping an eye on them." She is a churchgoer but doesn't necessarily see much of a religious nature to the job.

She says: "The younger

'It is unlikely Prince Henry will ask any of them for a job'

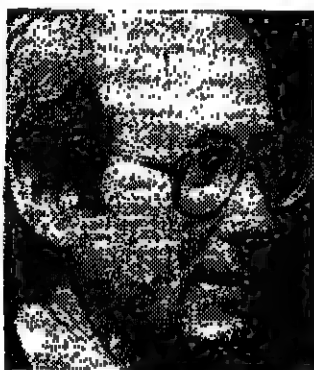
children see me as a sort of fairy godmother who arrives with money and presents, which is nice, but I think later on I could be used as a sounding board for them or even a help to them, getting jobs and that sort of thing."

It is most unlikely that Prince Henry will go to any of his godparents for a job, though he may well go to them for advice and sympathy, especially to his uncle, with whom he will have the common bond of being a monarch's second son.

According to one avid royalty-watcher, his line-up of godparents is rather like any other, featuring as it does family and very rich friends. There is even the tiniest suggestion of flexibility as two have been involved in divorces.

But it is not to be imagined that any of them will forget Christmas and birthdays, because there is a single significant detail which distinguishes royal godparents from any others: the honour of being asked is simply too great to forget.

GUARDIANS FIT FOR A PRINCE



Gerald Ward



Prince Andrew



Mrs Bartholomew



Lady Sarah Armstrong-Jones



Bryan Organ



Lady Vestey

MEDICAL BRIEFING

Party peace

Christmas is not always the time of boisterous high spirits and goodwill to all men as the popular image has us believe. For many, the contrast between their lives and the imagined good time that everybody else is having creates considerable tension.

Twenty years ago an American psychologist, Dr Richard Rahe, quantified this stress and discovered that the average family Christmas rated somewhere between taking out a mortgage and having a minor run-in with the police.

Dr Rahe's research shows that if a family Christmas is to be happy it needs planning, with particular thought being given to young children and elderly people who react badly to strange surroundings and

changes in their eating and drinking habits.

As a general rule visits should not be too long; better to have a successful short stay than risk a prolonged family quarrel.

It is also better to be realistic about the number of people who can stay in any one house; camping in the dining room may be fun at bedtime on Christmas Eve, but lack of sound sleep is not a perfect recipe for a happy Christmas.

Alcohol as a remedy for family tension needs care; the host has to strike a delicate balance between breaking the ice and risking trouble when 20 assorted relatives, all suffering from hangovers, are exposed to each other's foibles.

Alcohol exaggerates characteristics; the benign become more relaxed with a couple of whiskies, but the same dose may cause aggression or weeping in the tense or unhappy.

Drinks before Christmas lunch are a particular problem. If, as so often happens, the turkey has not been as fast as expected, something to nibble with the gin and tonic will prevent hypoglycaemia - the big cut in blood sugar caused by alcohol. This can make some of the guests overemphatic and dogmatic.

Christmas lunch itself needs care. Most intensively reared turkeys are infected with salmonella and campylobacter (or both).

Tummy upsets will be avoided if the bird and all other uncooked meat is stored away from cooked foods.

Knives and other kitchen utensils used for preparing uncooked meat must not be used again without careful washing. Table surfaces in the kitchen must be scrubbed before prepared food is placed on them. Stuffing should be cooked separately, not inside the bird when its cooling effect prevents the thick breast meat from cooking properly. Neck stuffing is probably safe.



David Gower



John McEnroe

Left is best, hands down

A large number of top ball game players are left-handed, including John McEnroe, Jimmy Connors, David Gower and 30 per cent of leading American baseball players.

It was the late Professor Norman Geschwind, of Harvard, and Dr Peter Behan, a neurologist at Glasgow University, who first linked left-handedness with other conditions. Now, they have set up the Rodin Institute to study these links.

Left-handed people are more likely to be athletic, artistic (Rodin the sculptor was left-handed) and mathematical, but there are severe disadvantages.

Dr Behan has drawn attention to the close association between left-handedness (or having a left-handed mother) with epilepsy, congenital heart disease, severe migraine, al-

lergic disorders, dyslexia (12 times more common in left-handed people), childhood stuttering, the hyperkinetic syndrome and autism - 40 per cent of autistic children have left-handed mothers.

These statistics, together with the anatomical differences noted in the brain of dyslexic patients, would seem to confirm that at least some if not most of the children who have been diagnosed as having dyslexia, autism and hyperkinetic syndrome are suffering from a neurological disease and not psychological damage.

Dr Behan has shown that these diseases, which predominantly affect the male, are related to testosterone levels in intra-uterine life, possibly through this hormone's effect on the thymus gland.

Deadly drinks

History teaches how two former American presidents, Thomas Jefferson and John Adams, failed to survive the celebrations of the 50th Independence Day, and many a dignitary has collapsed at his retirement party.

It has always been assumed that the effect of excitement on the coronary arteries was to blame, but two Americans, Dr A Greenspan and Dr S F Schaal, have suggested in *Annals of Internal Medicine* that alcohol may contribute in some cases by causing an irregular heart rhythm.

Most, but not all, doctors teach that alcohol in small quantities is beneficial. It is a mild tranquilliser, and a quick nip of whisky or brandy may relieve angina.

But care should be taken by patients who have cardiac arrhythmias, an irregular action of the heart, particularly if they have previously noticed an association between taking alcohol and palpitations.

A trial staged by the Americans demonstrates the detrimental effect of alcohol in these patients. After 30oz of 80 per cent proof whisky, a third of them developed a potentially serious ventricular tachycardia - an increase in heart beat.

A fresh hearing for grommets



Grommets - small tubes through the eardrums used to treat glue ear - have only been restored to fashionable medicine in the past 20 years, but are now firmly established. This week's *British Medical Journal* has a comprehensive review, for both doctors and laymen, by Mr David East, of Scarborough.

Glue ear, secretory otitis media, occurs when middle ear fluid fails to drain down the

Eustachian tube - connecting the ear to the back of the throat - and collects behind the eardrum, causing deafness, recurrent ear infection, earache and discharge. Grommets take over the Eustachian tube's drainage function, staying in place for six to 18 months before being pushed out. A second or third may be needed if good drainage has not been restored, and occasionally it is necessary to have a permanent system installed.

Dr Thomas Stuttford

Tomorrow
START THE WEEKEND WITH THE PAPER THAT INFORMS, STIMULATES, AMUSES AND PROVOKES

Portfolio £42,000 to be won
Royal's Daughter, Trevor Howard, Sarah Miles (Friday, TV)



- Tax your brains: With the Jumbo Crossword
- Quiztime: The winners share £475
- On TV: All the Christmas films
- Cheers: Wine as an investment

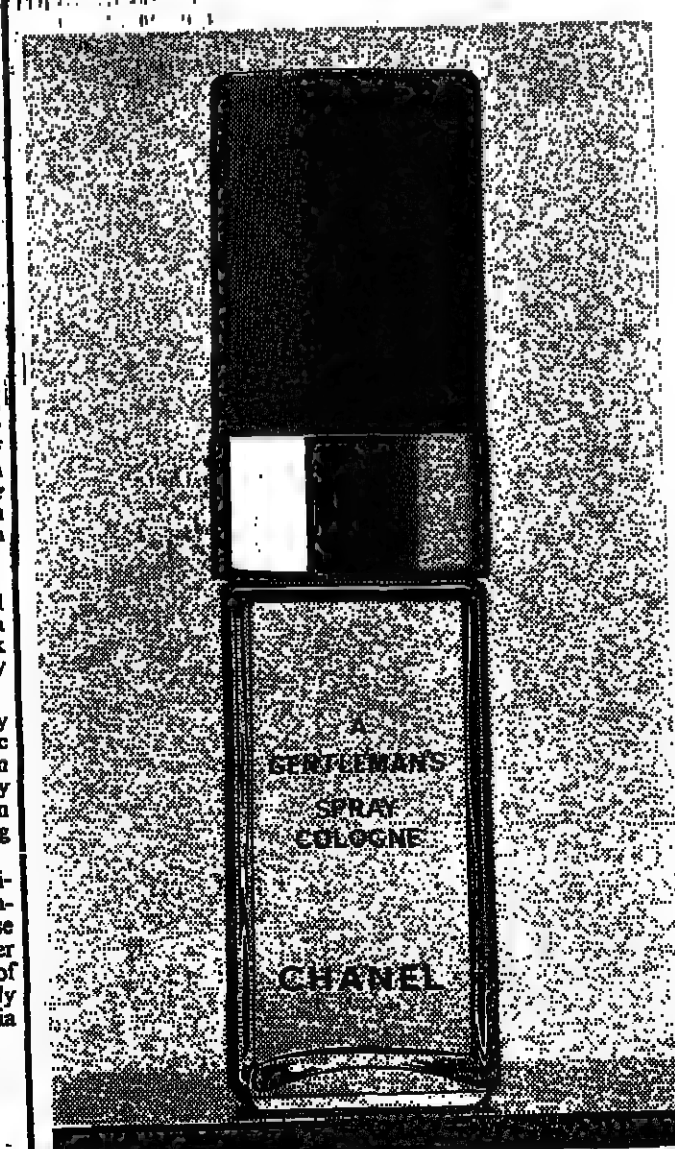
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CHANEL
FOR GENTLEMEN

ملفات من الأصل

THE TIMES DIARY

Views on Hughes

Was Gavin Ewart disappointed not to be named Poet Laureate? He gave me an eloquent reply, ending it on *Hearing First News about Ted Hughes (Laureate):*

SO IT'S TED! And all its other contenders can go to bed

-After our long vigil - Larkin, Fuller, Enright, Ewart, And sleep, It's Ted who's top of the heap!

Now at last we can rest, We weren't the most suitable, Though we might be the best (Larkin?) But did Ted acquiesce For £97,102?

It's hard to imagine for hard Yorkshiremen. They don't give out for now, Were there secret inducements More potent than gold? (Presence at the birth of royal corgis?) I think we should be told!

I await Hughes' response - in verse, of course.

Old boycott

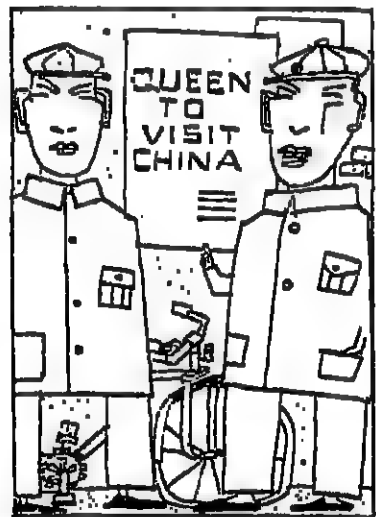
The boys of Eton College have finally got their own back on turncoat old boy George Orwell. They kept away in their droves when the National Theatre's touring production of Peter Bogdanov's anthology *Orwell's England* arrived at the school theatre this month. Headmaster Eric Anderson, embarrassed by the 300 empty seats at the show, attended by *Guardian* critic Michael Billington and academic Richard Hoggart, began asking what better thing his charges had found to occupy them that Saturday night. Writing in the school magazine, master William Rees is convinced that many were watching, and deserving, *Dynasty* on television.

After more than 300 sessions of the public enquiry, staff at the Nuclear Information Centre at Sizewell are sending out Christmas cards reading: "Pss! Let you into a little secret! We don't think it's about nuclear power at all. We think they're out to beat *The Mousetrap*."

Raising the roof

The Irish are not holding out much hope for poor Pia Zadora, who is soon to star in Ireland in *Lonely Lady*. The *Irish Times* records that during a performance of *The Diary of Anne Frank*, in which she played the title role, the audience found it of such "sublime awfulness" that when the Germans were searching Anne's family home, someone burst out: "She's in the attic."

BARRY FANTONI



"Then who was that we just waved goodbye to?"

Non-partisan

Not to be outdone by CND, Lady Olga Maitland rings to assure me that her Women and Families for Defence group is also the subject of sinister surveillance. The circumstantial evidence is overwhelming: phones constantly on the blink, drinks party invitations gone astray, first-class letters delivered late, parcels found lurking in the corners of sorting offices and packages arriving unwrapped. How times have changed. In the old days one merely blamed the Post Office.

Unfair

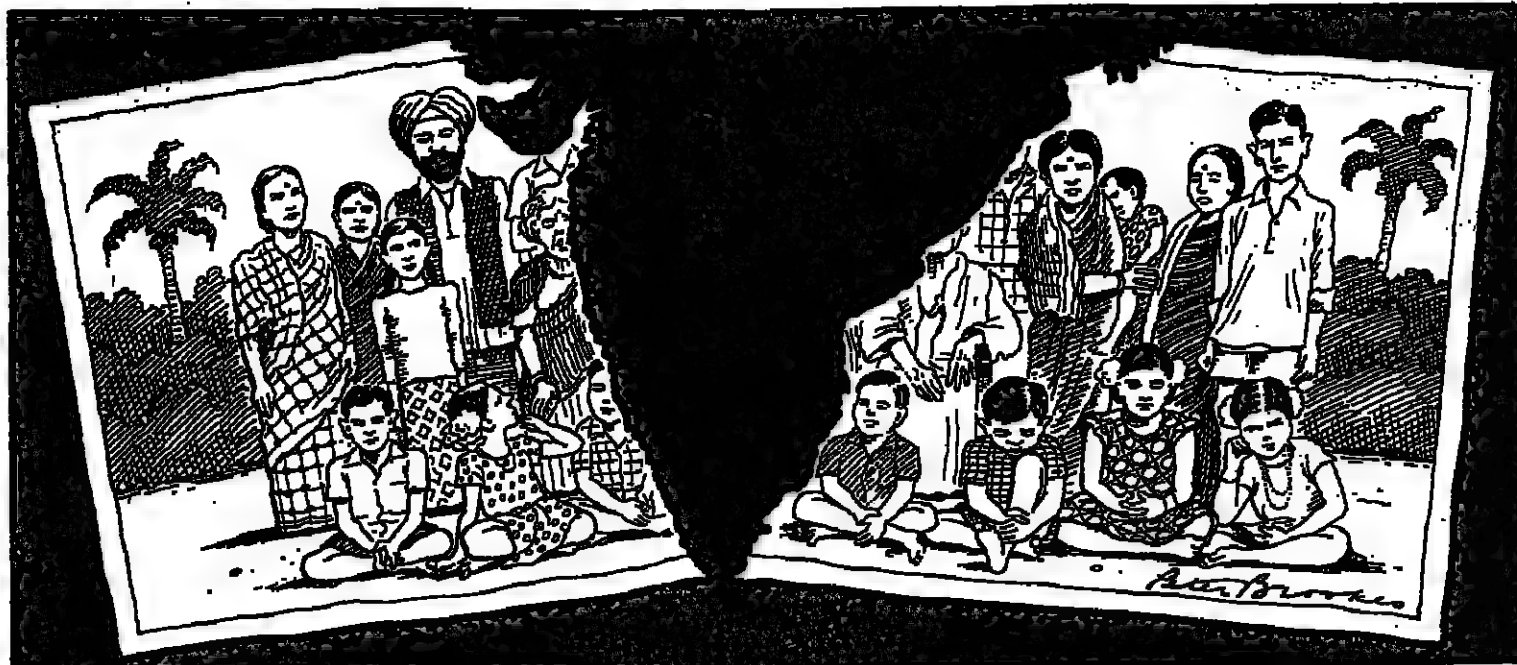
The Office of Fair Trading, which with the Post Office has set up the code of practice for dealing with complaints about the post, received a letter this week with no stamp. It duly paid 23p for postage due. Inside: a Christmas card wishing the OFT's code of practice men best wishes, from the Royal Mail Marketing Department.

Fluctuasian

Labour's membership may be dwindling nationally, but not in Ealing Southall. In the past three months membership there has soared from 700 to more than 2,000 as whole households - nay, whole streets - have been enlisted in three predominantly Asian wards. Labour has not suddenly discovered some vote-winning formula: the rise has to do with the resolute bid of sitting MP Syd Bidwell. For every 50 members a ward can send one more delegate to the all-important General Management Committee, and it seems that several Asian councillors have set their sights on Westminster. Bidwell is confident of staving off the challenge. "I have supporters in every mosque and temple," he confides.

PHS

Three days before the Indian election, novelist Anita Desai sees the Sikh-Hindu rift become every day more permanent



New Delhi Winter has come to Delhi: a fine khaki-coloured dust has settled upon the city, and in pavement stalls cotton quilts are being sewn for the season's sales; in the parks gardeners are lovingly tending cypripediums for the annual flower show. In the market places everywhere shops are being repaired and fresh coats of paint applied. A closer look will reveal that these shops have been recently burnt. The owners are almost invariably Sikh. They look both subdued and stoical. None is willing to say much. "It was fully insured," snaps the smart lady butcher in a fashionable South Delhi market. The priest of a destroyed temple says philosophically: "Who can explain what happened? Every man has within him greed, envy, lust and hate. When these erupt, such things happen."

Sikhs are not new to communal violence - they inflicted it upon Muslims in 1947 and Muslims inflicted it on them throughout their history. Communal hatred and violence blow through the country as regularly as dust storms; it is almost always the Muslims or the Harijans (lower castes) who are the victims. We are accustomed - even hardened - to seeing newspaper photographs of dazed survivors sitting by their destroyed homes or the corpses of victims. What has shaken every Indian in this latest storm is the sight of the proud and prosperous Sikhs, creator of the green revolution in Punjab, known as some of the best soldiers in the Indian army, successful in every field from politics to carpentry, reduced to the state of beggars, waiting to be fed and clothed in relief camps.

A jewelled, silk-clad Sikh woman driving out to one of these camps with sacks of wheat and bundles of old clothes said: "We Sikhs are not used to this. Sikhs never beg. Now my son comes home from school and tells me other children say to him 'Sikh women will come to our homes and scrub our cooking pots for us'. But Sikh women have never gone out to work. These children are echoing what they have heard their parents say. This is how people are talking."

This humiliation is what subdues the Sikhs at the moment, as well as the fear born of their new awareness that they are in a minority outside the Punjab. There have been wild rumours that the Sikhs plan to kill 33 Hindus for "very murdered Sikh". The head priest of the Golden Temple in Amritsar has said: "I don't know about revenge but the Sikh religion does say that oppressors of Sikhs should be given a befitting reply and punished for their crime."

Yet Punjab remained silent, in the grip of censorship and the shock at the fury of the mob violence and the extent of the Sikh loss and degradation. The Hindu population too remained quiet, knowing nothing good can come of such humiliation and that the tables could turn.

This fear on the part of the Hindus in Punjab and the Sikhs outside has led to a curious social awkwardness: in mixed gatherings of people who had never given a thought to their religion, there are strained silences. No one can lightly make jokes about Sikhs (a traditional butt for humour of the wily Welshman and the parsimonious Scotsman) or any more, Hindus are taken aback by the fierceness with which Sikhs speak about the violated sanctity of the Golden Temple. Sikhs are guarded in their speech when Hindus are near. A suspiciousness unknown before is at large.

When questioned, Hindus of Delhi's middle class claim a permanent breakdown in the relations between Sikhs and Hindus is unthinkable - the two communities have always celebrated festivals together, and intermarried - and that every effort at bridging the present gulf must be made. In the riot affected areas, however, the Hindu and Muslim neighbours of the murdered and looted Sikhs stand around sullenly watching government administrators and relief workers on their rounds. "They deserved what they got," they mutter, "these Sikhs had to be taught a lesson". There is neither remorse nor concern, only a smouldering anger. The difference in the attitudes of the upper and lower classes underlines another nasty home truth: that the gap between rich and poor is so enormous that the present situation will be difficult to maintain. The recent riots were a sample of what can be expected in the future.

In the slums the difference between the Hindus and Sikhs was not marked. In Trilokpur, one of the worst affected areas, the people -

An unassuaged anguish, a festering anger

both Hindus and Sikhs - worked as coolies or street vendors. The Sikhs occupied exactly the same tiny brick houses as their Hindu neighbours. Yet they gave the impression of being marginally better off because traditionally Sikhs live better - eat well and spend money. In Kalyanpur, one of the poorest areas, the Sikhs did not even own brick houses. They had come from their villages to earn a living by making straw thatch for roofs and lived in mud huts. Yet many men from these families had gone to the Gulf to work and sent home transistor radios and tape-recorders. Surrounded by people for whom even a cooking pot is an object of envy, they were murdered and their houses razed to the ground. It was not envy or greed that led to the riots: it was the relentless brutalization of the poor.

All these slum dwellers had been forced out of their villages by poverty or caste-discrimination in search of a living in the city. In 1976, the late Sanjay Gandhi launched a slum clearance programme and had them dumped across the river in resettlement colonies. Without any means to support themselves in the wasteland, many were driven to crime and the "colonies" became centres for the brewing of illicit liquor, prostitution, drug-trafficking and gang warfare. It made up a Brechtian underworld of which the middle class, living in their comfortable homes on the right side of the river, preferred not to know. Their eyes were forced open and made to see it for what it was when the mobs stormed over the invisible barriers with cans of kerosene and burnt and looted what they had imagined was inviolable. The communal riot became a class riot.

The Sikh lady taking old clothes and rice to the riot-hit areas said: "These riots have affected the rich more than the poor." She was clearly not referring to the wealthy land-lords and industrialists whose farms and factories had been burnt down, and have been handsomely compensated. "The poor can always go to Punjab and start working as coolies

there or sell vegetables or peanuts. But the rich have so much property and so many assets here - they can't just give them up and move. And how can we live in Punjab amongst the Jat Sikhs? We Delhi Sikhs are different from them."

One has only to visit some of the refugee camps still crowded with Sikhs from one of the worst scenes of the violence - Block 32 of Trilokpur - to see the difficulties they face in returning to any semblance of normality. Most of those crowded, 10 to a room, in a new low-cost housing estate at Farash Bazaar, are women - the widows and daughters of murdered Sikhs. Almost every family here has lost a male relation, several have lost all. The women are still in a state of shock, or hysteria. It is impossible to talk to them of the future, they can only repeat the dirge for the dead.

After trying in vain to explain that they were offering interim relief money the relief workers retreat to their headquarters at the police station to consult the few articulate representatives of the refugee community and plot how the women can be rehabilitated. They are applying to the government for a new housing estate since the refugees refuse to return to the scene of the crime. They also intend to set up small scale industries and handicraft centres where these women will be able to sew, embroider and knit and sell their goods. The women will first need training: largely illiterate, none has ever worked before. The offer from various firms and factories to employ a certain number has had to be turned down: the women are unwilling to leave the security of the community, use public transport and venture into alien surroundings. Other organizations, like the mobile crèche, have moved in to set up schools. Before tents, rugs, stationery or any equipment at all arrived on the scene, the women are teaching children, orally, the alphabet, numbers and multiplication tables.

While the government is preoccupied with bickering over the coming elections, Sikh leaders not under detention indulge in barbed ambiguities to the Sikh population and the press and government. With such leadership the two communities seem to have no option but to wait for the next spark - an accident or no more than a rumour - to set alight another human bonfire. "As one Punjab Hindu said, 'There is petrol and there is a lit candle. One does not know when the two could come together.' A Sikh woman asked: 'The future? I can't see the future. It is too dark to see the future.'"

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Peter Lennon meets Tony Harrison, an alien in two cultures

Taking people to poetry



Harrison: combining the classical and the vernacular

alienated from my background and that is what makes me want to communicate with it," he says.

The idea of social mobility is to climb the ladder and kick it away, but a poet cannot do that. "Because your formative years acquiring speech are spent in the home," he said, "it is there you acquire your language." But he also feels alienated from the literary world, "a loner in modern poetry." His preoccupation is to do poetic justice to both alienations.

His linguistic talents have allowed him to make a name as a translator, rather than as a poet. Of the classics, his translations of *The Oresteia*, of *Molière's Misanthrope* and *Racine's Phaedra* were notable successes at the National. Harrison claims that his free translations do not distort the original: "I use a kind of translator's jargon. It's not pug-

istics. You don't batter the original into submission, you use the weight of its political assumptions." One of his judo throws landed *Phaedra*, a general critical satisfaction: in colonial India, and *The Misanthrope* in revolutionary Paris of the late Sixties.

Harrison believes passionately that "the short and simple annals of the poor" in Britain are disgracefully scarce. In France, he agrees, they do exist. There is a whole school of analyst historians, minister to the needs of insubstantial peasants who would otherwise leave not a wrack behind. Of his own ancestors, he says, "only the silence of the past comes to us". The poet, he says, should have a similar mission to the historian of "rescuing from silence the class into which he was born, and to articulate for them certain moments of the past."

But a poet has a peculiar difficulty in getting across his liberating messages: poetry is the plaything of the middle classes. "Literature," he says, "can be used to cement class boundaries. That is why I am against the cult of difficulty in modern writing, against preciosity which is more intended to catch the eye of the critic."

His device, he says, knowing the kind of people who are likely to pick up his poetry for literary gratification, is to "give them that gratification not shared by the majority". His sonnets, poems about his father, or a "historical" poem such as *National Trust*, are peppered with these rebukes.

These might appear too fine, refined and fragile messages to be heard above, for instance, the coarse cacophony from the Commons, but the poet can only do his best at a time when, Harrison says, "class hostilities have become more marked and the Word is under attack."

But in a new, long poem to be published soon by the *London Review of Books* we find him fighting not so much for life but for peace within the graveyard. It is an elegy written on his parents' cemetery which has become the target for the graffiti of disenfranchised Leeds United supporters who aerosol the gravestones with obscenities.

The question the honest philistine might ask is: how could anyone be a professional poet in 1984? There are no mysterious corners left in the globe, every blade of grass has been nosed into by media technology, and it is not *la belle dame sans merci* who intimidates us but a potential cosmic horror too robust for rhymes. Where does the poet get his will to write?

"If I could separate my intelligence from my heart," Harrison said, "my intelligence receives very grim pictures of the world and has an enormous tendency to pessimism. It seems to me that the strong rhythms I employ are a way of preserving a momentum into optimism, even though the mind is registering nightmares."

That rhythmic energy is a kind of life-support system that takes me through the fire, so the poet in me is not blasted by the intelligence it receives, is not destroyed by it."

David Watt

Jingle bombs, jingle bombs...

What is peace on earth? Or perhaps one should ask, what on earth is peace. The nearly simultaneous arrival of Christmas and Mr Gorbachev has prompted the question - and provided no satisfactory answer.

Most people instinctively want peace, as they always have - wonderful, uncomplicated, pristine peace with blue birds all over the shop and lions lying down with lambs. Because they have identified the direct nuclear clash between the superpowers as the most dramatic as well as the most dangerous form of conflict, they have pinned all their hopes of peace on the next round of arms control negotiations. That is why Mr Gorbachev's statements are being scanned with such desperate eagerness for any sign that may have a bearing on the arms talks in the New Year.

However, Scrooge-like it may seem, we ought to distrust ourselves in this mood and distrust the Americans in it even more. In the US after four years in the depths of the cold war, the usual reaction has finally set in and a wild manic upswing of opinion is now under way. Mr Reagan successfully smeared "détente" by association with the humiliations of the Carter era, but now the President is telling the American people and the world that détente is just round the corner: if only Mr Gromyko will show a bit of flexibility when he meets George Shultz next month.

The immediate dangers of this state of mind are obvious. For one thing all the ballyhoo creates a tremendous pressure for a quick "fix" of some kind without too much worry about the long term. For another, there will be fearsome public reaction if (as is perfectly feasible) the arms negotiations lead to no immediate breakthrough.

The basic problem is that we still think in categories of "peace" and "war" that are really out of date. If the "great powers" are not actually fighting each other, we feel, they ought, logically speaking, to be "at peace". And if they are at peace they ought not to be preparing for war. And if they are, in fact, preparing for war they will almost certainly end by fighting one. Wars in which the "great powers" are not participants are sad or terrible: they even seem dangerous at times when they look like involving the superpowers. But they do not, really, damage our basic vision of a world that would be sufficiently safe and peaceful for us if only the US and the Soviet Union would cease the arms race.

The more one thinks about it, the more inadequate this picture becomes. If we believe in nuclear deterrence and, recognize that technology, in nuclear weapons and rockets, as in everything else, will not stand still, then some kind of arms race - even if at a much lower cost and level - can hardly be avoided. That is not war, but it is hardly peace either.

Naturally there are some people - E. P. Thompson and President Reagan, for instance - who believe that it would be better if the world was rid of nuclear weapons altogether, even if the chances of conventional conflict were thereby increased. But the truth is that, thanks to the balance of terror, there has never been more than an infinitesimal chance of a nuclear war even at the worst times in the last four years.

The real disadvantages of the

frigidity (or bellicosity) of super-power relations have lain elsewhere - in the vast waste of resources on armaments, and in the hysteria whipped up on all sides, which has seriously undermined the cohesion of the western alliance and led to all sorts of stupid and destabilizing distortions of western policy towards the Third World.

The conclusion of all this is that the search for an old-fashioned peace is as fruitless and frustrating as the search for an old-fashioned Christmas. We cannot recreate a non-nuclear world or international system so fragmented that we can afford to ignore people starving or killing each other (by old-fashioned or by effective methods) in far-off places - any more than we can recreate a world of yule logs, sleighs and jolly ostlers. We must try to make peace in our own times and on our own terms.

Exactly what the shape of this peace might be I do not know, but the first task is to clear away three major illusions. First, it is no use expecting the two superpowers to reach a state of disarmed amity. There are too many real interests and perceived principles at stake. What we should be hoping and aiming for is greater understanding between them about the rules and limits of their relationship. This means constant political communication, less rhetoric, much greater transparency, and probably some broad, though implicit, agreement on spheres of influence.

Secondly, it is no help to proclaim that the main disturber of peace in the contemporary world is injustice. The problems of minorities are at the root of much of the most serious conflict today; but one group's sense of injustice usually clashes with some other group's sense of its legitimate rights. Today's world is full of fighters whose temperament and political provocation encourage them to sharpen issues and harden principle rather than seek common interest and indulge in "appeasement" (in the literal sense) - that is, of gaining time and blurring hard edges. Mrs Thatcher is one of them. In other words let the peace-maker beware. He is in a trade which demands an unflinching degree of amorality.

Finally, let nobody suppose that there is a quick way to produce a peaceful world. Peace is a continuous battle to keep conflict within bounds. One "solution" will always lead to another problem. If Britain abandoned Northern Ireland there would probably be a civil war; if the Soviet Union withdrew from Eastern Europe then ancient Balkan strifes would re-emerge; if Israel were thrown into the sea the Arabs would be at each other's throats; if South Africa became a free black state, its economy would very likely fall into disrepair, causing a different kind of hardship to its population.

These are not arguments for leaving such problems alone or for abandoning peace-making; they merely indicate that one ought to approach these matters in a cautious, realistic spirit, and take a long view. Sir Geoffrey Howe was quite right when he said the other day that relations with Russia were an endless process.

Philip Howard

Great editors I didn't know

The question this morning, brothers and sisters, is what makes a good editor. The hard-nosed *Journalist's* answer is that the ideal editor is Cloy the Gorilla, partly because he is better-looking than most editors, but mainly because he is dead, and stuffed, and safely in the Natural History Museum, where he can perform his ceremonial function of looking impressive without interfering with his professional journalistic getting tomorrow's paper out. Another hard-nosed back-slash editor as a person employed on a newspaper whose business it is to separate the wheat from the chaff, and to see that the chaff is printed.

Great editors come in all shapes and sizes. It may be instructive, or even advantageous, to look for some common factor. Thomas Barnes, the first editor in the modern sense, was a robust intellectual and a very private man. He was a prolific writing editor, and his language was violent, if not offensive. Suggesting Cabinet changes: "The rubbish must be wheeled away to the last barrowful. Good God! Are we to have another downright fraud passed on the country?"

Barnes, the Great Unknown, detested the personality cult of vain journalists. After the thundering patriarch of journalism had edited *The Times* for 24 years, and become, according to the Lord Chancellor, the most powerful man in the country, his name was published in his newspaper for the first time to announce his death: "On the 7th inst., at his house in Soho-Square, Thomas Barnes, Esq., in the 56th year of his age." That was all.

Delane, Barnes's successor, could not have been more different. He was a hearty, sporting, sociable Irishman, by no means an intellectual. He was not a writing editor. We can identify only two or three leaders that he wrote himself during his 36 years in the chair. His strength lay in editing, cutting, strengthening, and adding a touch of ginger not only to the leaders but to every article that appeared in his paper. He "diced" noted. "No column has been published in *The Times* which has not some of his handwriting in the margin."

Sir William Haley was an editor from the Barnes stable. An intrepid colleague once asked Haley whether he had had a good weekend. He replied: "Very, I read seven books, and reviewed four of them. I was young journalist, brings his first leader to Haley: 'The line I have taken, Sir, is...' 'I don't mind what line you have taken, provided that you have written 700 words, and not a word more or less.' When the Israeli ambassador sent him a crate of Israeli oranges at Christmas, he returned them at once, with the same messenger, and the following Christmas, he wrote at the bottom of his Christmas card: 'Send no more of your oranges.'"

Sir William Ross-Mogg was a *Delane* when it came to dining out, or "swelling" as *Delane* called it. Whatever drama was raging around the news desk, William caught the 5.10 pm to Somerset on a Friday night, and let his professionals get on with it. He was a *Barnes* of leader-writing editors, though with a more whimsical and eccentric touch than Barnes.

Harold Ross, the brilliant editor of *The New Yorker*, was clearly as dotty as a painting by Seurat. Interviewed, as private as Barnes, prickly, a stickler for accuracy with mania for facts and detail, he covered the margins of his contributors' copy with such designations as "unclear", "repetition", "cliche", and "ellipsis". He hated going to the theatre because people recognized him and came up to him, and even talked to him; but he kept on going, in case one day he saw a play he liked.

These editors were clearly a very mixed bunch. The only thing they had in common was that they were as good as their last issue, in the same unforgetting way that a journalist is as good as his or her last issue. They were great editors because they had an instinct for good pieces, and published them. In the symbiotic relationship between an editor and the most ephemeral of publications, each side makes the other great.

(That's enough about editors, Ed.)



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TARGET FOR 1985

The parliamentary turmoil surrounding the Government in the weeks before the Christmas adjournment is not an automatic guide to its standing in the country. Looking at the public opinion polls, and at the perfectly adequate result of the Southgate by-election, Mrs Thatcher and her colleagues may feel that they need have no cause for great worry. They will recall that in the mid-term of the last Parliament they were losing seats to the Alliance parties, and that the Government's economic policies were then under heavy public attack (inside the Cabinet as well as out of it) from that section of the Conservative Party then described as "Wets" who wanted more public spending (inflation notwithstanding) in the hope that it would produce more jobs.

Yet despite these difficulties, Mrs Thatcher went on to a triumphal victory in the election of 1983, which the Prime Minister may think cuts down to size the most recent attacks from those Tories who are again demanding expansion through public spending as the remedy for unemployment. What has been done once, she may be tempted to think, can be done again.

Besides, looking across the House of Commons it is impossible to see a credible alternative government among the Opposition parties. On the surface, Labour in parliament has lately presented a more moderate image, provided one can forget the scary Scargillism which convulsed its party conference less than three months ago. But all the evidence is that the public does not want the goods that Labour has on its counter, and wants still less those barely half concealed beneath the counter which would forcibly be pushed

on the public if Labour were in power.

All this, then is comfort for Mrs Thatcher. But when comfort is duly taken she would be wise to pay heed to dangers in the present situation which were not present in the comparable troubles of the last Parliament. Then the overriding enemy was inflation and most people understood that this was so. When Mrs Thatcher said there was no alternative to her policies they agreed and supported her. They were prepared to pay the price to defeat it. Now inflation is down to under five per cent, which is still far too high, but is low enough to make it seem a less virulent enemy. The cause in which the Government still needs to maintain its discipline over public spending is just as real but is less clear cut, and precisely because this is so, the Government needs to give much more attention to carrying public opinion with it.

Instead, it has allowed its energies to be deflected into unnecessary battles in the House of Commons over what are essentially secondary issues instead of concentrating on carrying public opinion along with a clear and co-ordinated strategy for disciplining public spending, beating inflation and creating the circumstances appropriate to a productive and flourishing economy. In two parliamentary sessions successively, it has brought about a situation in which Mr Patrick Jenkin has been a parliamentary Aunt Sally, first on rate-capping, now on GLC abolition and over the spending of money raised by local authorities from council house sales.

All this has come about because the Government went into an early election in 1983

without having prepared a proper strategy. Unable to solve its rates problem and rightly concerned with the inflationary level of local government spending, it hastily cobbled policies together which do not cohere and, certainly in respect of GLC abolition, have alienated too much opinion.

The 1984-85 Session is the key Session of this Parliament, in which the Government should have been able to identify to the public the essential achievements it hoped to put before them at the next election, the core of which must surely be a coherent reappraisal of priorities for social spending. That is vital, both to put resources where the real needs are and also to exert the discipline over public spending that is essential if inflation is to be conquered. Now, though the Fowler review will be ready in the coming year, the necessary legislation is unlikely until later in 1986, which means carrying controversy dangerously close to the next election without anything positive to show for it.

At the heart of the problem is the government's failure to act as a team thinking out a concerted strategy. Its approach is cellular; hence the ill-planned advance and the forced retreat of Sir Keith Joseph over student grants. Too much policy is made on the trot, or by Mrs Thatcher gathered together with two or three as problems crop up. There is too little forward thinking and, so far as the economy is concerned, too much weight on the tax-cutting strategy (good in itself) of a Chancellor who is as bad a communicator with colleagues as he is with the country.

So far this has been a stultified parliament, but it is not too late for the government to mend its ways if it is willing to learn the right lessons.

THE MESSAGE OF THE POUND

The Treasury has eschewed committing itself to any target level for sterling on the foreign exchanges, if only because pursuing policy objectives on both sterling and the money supply at the same time is liable to make both ineffective. Money took the higher priority in the battle against inflation. But that does not stop the recent precipitate fall in the pound's value being a signal of considerable and almost wholly depressing significance. Yesterday the pound touched new all-time lows against the average of the currencies of countries we trade with. That automatically cuts Britain's standard of living, increases our relative inflation rates, puts off the prospect of lower interest rates and, perhaps worst of all, tends to undermine the aura of confidence so vital to our continued economic recovery.

These damaging effects are not so dramatic as they were a few years ago, partly due to changing trade patterns and dollar-dominated North Sea oil, partly due to unconscious changes in attitudes brought by the Government's affected indifference to the fate of the pound. The supposed offsetting benefits to industry beloved of a generation of devaluationists have likewise faded. Firms most sensitive to the exchange rate closed in great numbers when the sterling index

rose to a third above today's level, double today's rate against the dollar, in 1981.

The fall, more insistent as 1984 progressed, can be explained in three levels of perspective, each more chastening than the one before.

The threat of further oil price cuts, focused on the Opec meeting in Geneva, triggered this week's run. The markets had already been made unsympathetic by a sheaf of alarming economic statistics, many of them distorted, for different reasons, in the wrong direction for sterling. Few of those selling our currency seriously doubt that the Government's overall economic strategy is broadly on course, but there are temporary worries about monetary growth, the trend of wage costs and trade.

Runs on currencies, however, presuppose a background of weakness. The Treasury and the Bank of England have made it so clear that they will cut domestic interest rates to gain the benefits of past restraint as soon and as often as the exchange markets permit that speculators are hardly likely to choose sterling as an alternative to the dollar if they suspect the United States currency is about to lose its recent overwhelming attractions. Moreover, the subtle changes in policy since Mr Nigel Lawson became Chancellor have not

been lost on markets. They see ministers quite happy, provided the money supply growth ends within its target ceilings, even though the output it needs to finance has been pushed well below forecast by the coal strike. The opportunity to make further inroads into inflation has been passed by.

The enduring dispute in the mines also confirms the indefinable suspicions of many that the British disease is still liable to break out at any moment and, despite Government creating the right conditions for steady growth, the economy still lacks any sign of the dynamism so obvious in the United States and now reasserting itself in Japan. Productivity growth, so spectacular in the phase when British industry was rationalising itself and shedding labour has failed to sustain its momentum during the past few months.

Employees may be realistic, but they are fully engaged in the drive to create wealth. Managers are more efficient, but are they committed to the expansion and the new products needed to create new jobs, instead of relying on overtime in case recovery does not last? There is much to be done before the British economy enters that virtuous circle of steadily rising currency and real incomes that so fired the Conservatives' shadow Treasury team before they took on the task.

RESPECT FOR A 'DWINDLING RIGHT'

When a child of parents of certain religious denominations falls ill, the parents may refuse to allow it to be given necessary blood transfusions because their religion prohibits it. The doctors then sometimes have the child made a ward of court just till the surgery is completed. It is a faintly absurd but effective and public way of enabling doctors to overrule the parents while paying proper respect to their legal right in general to give or refuse consent. Conscience is saved; the legal forms are saved; the child is saved. The situation that the Court of Appeal ruled on yesterday in the case of Mrs Gillick is distinct in one important respect: the doctor who judges that it is in the best interests of a child under 16 to provide her with contraceptive assistance without the consent of her parents overrules them privately, without his judgement being tested by any court.

The statute and case law covering this special situation have been considered unclear, and many doctors have seen it as their duty to give help if they are convinced that the girl is unlikely to abandon sexual activity with all its dangers, and that her relations with her parents are such that they would refuse consent, or perhaps react by rejecting her if they found out. Without the assurance of secrecy, girls would be less likely to seek help. In 1980 the Department of Health issued guidelines sanc-

tioning this in the "most unusual" event of the girl steadfastly resisting all urgings to bring her parents in.

There was no compulsion of doctors to prescribe against their own judgement, but Mrs Gillick felt that the guidelines infringed her rights as a parent and sought a guarantee from her health authority that they would not be invoked in respect of her own daughters. The health authority refused, and yesterday all three judges in the Court of Appeal found that it had been wrong to do so in her case.

The three judges were unanimous in finding that there was no basis in law for the idea that parental rights could be disregarded without the intervention of a court. They all stressed that it was desirable in general to entrench parental rights firmly, and undesirable for them to be overruled without due process.

Lord Justice Parker referred rather wistfully to one of Lord Denning's clarion calls for judicial creativity: referring to a case decided in Victorian days when a father's authority was absolute, he declined to accept "a view so much out of date": the authority of a parent over a minor was "a dwindling right which the courts will hesitate to enforce against the wishes of the child, and the more so the older he is". The judge added: "This it clearly is," before going on to reject Lord Denning's temptation. But a minor seeking

contraceptive advice is clearly not likely to be acting with straight-forward childish irresponsibility, and her assessment of her parents' views may be an accurate one.

It may be the law, but is it right? The argument has often been over-stated on both sides. Suggestions that contraception is something inaccessible without a doctor's help are as emotive as claims that this particular departmental circular is to blame for a growth in teenage promiscuity which is in any case not unambiguously demonstrable in the period in question. Either way, the law might precipitate tragedy in hard cases. But in most cases the parents will know the child better than the doctor does, and be more intensely concerned to protect its interests.

But the effect of yesterday's decision is to deny doctors the option of exercising a discretion legally in cases where a child may blunder into disaster acting without advice for fear that the doctor will tell. Some doctors are no doubt over-confident in applying their own moral prejudices in cases where parents legitimately hold opposite views; many doctors are scrupulous in avoiding doing so. The question is whether we trust doctors enough to exercise that kind of discretion. As the judges say, that is for Parliament to decide. Until Parliament has decided, doctors should beware of taking matters into their own hands.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Doctors unwilling to take prescription

From Mr Maurice Sutton

Sir, Dr Marks says (December 17) that limiting the number of drugs available on NHS prescriptions would result in patients no longer being able to obtain those drugs which may be best for them, under the NHS. These are emotive words aimed at influencing the public who are ignorant of the facts.

In *Mims*, the compendium of drugs that doctors may prescribe, there are 61 sedatives listed. They vary greatly in price, but all have the same action. Any one could be replaced by any of the others.

If a drug was inferior, market forces would ensure that it would soon cease to be manufactured. The decision on which drug to prescribe is now often made by a random selection of a name by a page of *Mims*, perhaps influenced subconsciously by the most recent bout of hospitalitis provided by a pharmaceutical firm.

The doctor is a custodian of the public purse and those of us who take our responsibilities seriously must welcome the minister's proposals.

Yours faithfully,
MAURICE SUTTON, Director,
Department of Radiotherapy & Oncology,
North Middlesex Hospital,
Edmonton, N18,
December 17.

From Dr D. T. Lipman

Sir, Your editorial, "Prescribing propaganda" (December 13) is not only offensive in tone, it totally fails to identify the reason why Mr Fowler's proposals have evoked such a strong adverse reaction from the medical profession (which shows few of the differences of opinion which divided its response to Mr Clark's deputising proposals).

Firstly, whatever the merits or demerits of individual drugs on the forbidden list, it represents a fundamental and, I believe, morally wrong change in the NHS to allow drugs to be prescribed privately, but not on NHS prescription. Many patients will simply not be able to afford to pay and will have a change of medication forced upon them which will not be forced upon the better-off.

Secondly, the list was announced without consultation with any representatives of the medical profession, which is already attempting to rationalize its prescribing habits. This process is being encouraged by the success of vocational training for general practice and by the activities of the Royal College of General Practitioners. Most younger doctors recognize the need for responsible prescribing for medical and economic reasons, and, like myself, deplore the excesses of recent years. This does not mean we accept the Government's arbitrary and ill thought-out proposal.

My third point is that the list of allowed drugs does not adequately cover the genuine needs of patients. I could give many examples of preparations which have specific useful properties, which it is proposed should not be available on the NHS, and which are not adequately substituted by the

allowed list. Unfortunately there is not enough room on your letters page to cover them all.

I do not pretend to know the answers to all the therapeutic problems with which GPs are faced every day. Patients' response to drugs is not uniform or invariably predictable. There are allergies, idiosyncratic responses, psychological and social factors, all of which should influence prescribing. Some patients only respond to unusual or rarely prescribed drugs.

Mr Fowler shows colossal arrogance in seeking, at a stroke, to rationalize prescribing without fully considering these factors and without apparently recognizing the effort and thought many doctors already apply to these problems.

Yours faithfully,
D. T. LIPMAN,
44 Lodore Road,
High West Jesmond,
Newcastle upon Tyne,
December 13.

From Dr J. W. Bennett

Sir, Your leading article of December 13 requires comment. The article reads as an attack on the medical profession and seems in poor taste largely because it shows total lack of understanding of the serious problem which may arise if the Government's proposals for a restricted drug list come into force.

Many of us have attempted to prescribe fewer, cheaper and more appropriate drugs for some years and I am only one of many who have issued generic prescriptions for approaching 10 years. What appears not to be understood is the wholesale removal of groups of drugs, retaining just a few - some of which are inappropriate.

May I give just two instances? Britain has led the world in caring for the terminally ill patient; for these people who need large doses of opiate drugs distressing and painful constipation will occur if appropriate laxatives are not used at the same time. All the most valuable laxatives commonly needed for these patients are excluded from the list of allowed drugs.

While discussing pain relief it should also be noted that no drugs between simple aspirin or paracetamol and powerful morphine remain in the list. This means that many people are going to be given morphine, perhaps too soon.

The second illustration concerns the benzodiazepine drugs: three only in this group are retained and two of them are drugs which remain in the bloodstream for much more than 24 hours. This is entirely inappropriate in many cases, modern experts now preferring to use drugs which are eliminated inside 12 or certainly 24 hours.

Many members of the profession would support a more sensible prescribing list, but an article about the problem should be based on understanding, not ignorance of some of the serious problems which are likely to arise.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN W. BENNETT,
The Surgery,
Brookfield Road,
Huddersfield,
Gloucester,
December 14.

Reopening Cyprus file

From Mr Richard Cottrell, MEP for Bristol (Conservative)

Sir, In his letter to you on December 10 the Greek Ambassador neglects entirely the central point made by your contributor in the article "Time to reopen the old Cyprus file". It is, of course, precisely that.

The Ambassador does not explain why two governments have refused, since the restoration of democracy, to publish all the documents relating to the Samson coup and the subsequent departure of the colonels from illegal office. If the Greek economic reasons what the ambassador describes as ludicrous notions, then they have only to open the files. Since they refused to adopt this course, then speculation - and indeed, much more than speculation - is inevitable.

It is by the way disingenuous to blacken the character of Professor Vrettoglou by dragging in his alleged association with the notorious CIA. There are many people in public office in Greece today who were appointed by that same junta. This is certainly a significant point to bear in mind in any discussion concerning not only Cyprus but Greece itself.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD COTTRELL,
18 Silver Street,
Midsomer Norton,
Bath,
Avon,
December 11.

Sizewell inquiry

From Mr John Baker

Sir, I should like to comment on two of your recent reports on the progress of the public inquiry into the proposed Sizewell pressurized water reactor power station. You reported (December 4) a claim by M Zerbib, a French engineer, that workers at the proposed power station would be exposed to twice the radiation level estimated by the Central Electricity Generating Board.

M Zerbib's figure of 430 mrem per year, compared with the CEBB target of 240 mrem a year, is not, as he claimed, in line with French experience of operating PWRs. It is a prediction based on an assumed increase in radiation levels in the future. As CEBB pointed out in the inquiry, neither M Zerbib's figure nor his assumption reflect experience in France or elsewhere.

French values. The most important of these is the use of low cobalt materials, which will reduce the radioactive contamination of the reactor coolant system, and therefore doses to operators and maintenance staff. The CEBB is committed to achieving the same radiation safety standards at Sizewell B as at its gas-cooled reactors.

Secondly, your reporting of the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate's final report to the inquiry (December 17) omitted to mention the inspectorate's conclusion that, provided the CEBB meets its future commitments and programmes on clearing safety issues, there is no reason why the predicted date of January, 1986, for licensing should not be met.

The NII's report also noted that agreement has now been reached on the resolution of the six substantial safety issues identified by the NII when the inquiry began, as well as good progress over a whole range of safety issues.

Joint boards for land reclamation?

From the President of the Landscape Institute

Sir, The progressive improvement of the physical environment of vast areas of England close to some of our greatest cities will surely stop with effect from April, 1986. This is the conclusion to be drawn from the Bill to abolish the metropolitan counties and the Greater London Council.

From a scrutiny of the published Bill one could be excused for believing that this traumatic legislation was prepared under the authorship of people quite unfamiliar with the accumulation of skills in landscape reclamation work assembled in the metropolitan counties - and, what is so ironic, with their proven record of cost-effectiveness.

Similarly, in the case of the GLC, it is becoming all too clear that the legislation's proposers have little idea of the extent of the GLC importance and influence in seeking to improve the landscape of the Lee and Colne valleys, their long tradition of managing a number of metropolitan parks which straddle borough boundaries, as well as their work in creating major new metropolitan parks in the underprivileged parts of the capital.

The GLC's and the metropolitan counties' record in the fields of reclamation and environmental renewal are very much related to their successful provision of an agreed planning framework for the metropolitan areas in which environmental improvement is seen as an essential precursor to economic regeneration. Programmes, priorities for action and funding are set in an overall context and are not complicated by local issues.

Since the Government is proposing joint boards for functions such as police, fire, passenger transport, etc., why not a similar provision to continue the vital environmental work currently being carried out by the metropolitan counties and GLC? Such boards could provide not only the overall strategic planning framework, but also the skills and

capability to tackle land reclamation, countryside and strategic environmental improvement, together with minerals control, highways planning and waste disposal. All are related environmental issues which require an overall planning context and direction to provide an efficient service to the metropolitan areas.

Such a joint board would also make possible the retention of the "specialist capability" (referred to by Mr Kenneth Baker, minister responsible for the Bill, in his statement in the House on November 16), within a small, efficient organization charged to tackle key strategic issues. If this proves impossible, then in some areas, such as the West Midlands Black Country, why not tackle the problem by means of a specialized development agency or urban development corporation, similar to those established in Merseyside and London dockland? Nobody close to this problem can understand (a) why established teams of very experienced people in landscape reclamation have to be broken up when their cost-effectiveness is not questioned, or (b) how the borough and district councils can be expected to sustain the sheer scale and momentum of the environmental role of the GLC and metropolitan counties.

All governments have accepted that environmental improvement is fundamental to achieving economic recovery in our metropolitan areas and accordingly have invested heavily in derelict land and urban programme funding. Has this Government adopted a different policy and, despite the Prime Minister's renowned concern for the growing strength of the "green vote" - now decided to abolish the very agencies that have a proven record in the field of environmental improvement?

Yours faithfully,
DAVID E. RANDALL,
President,
The Landscape Institute,
12 Carlton House Terrace, SW1,
December 17.

Third London airport

From Mr M. H. Statham

Sir, Your leader-writer ("Standed can wait" December 11) calls for a fifth terminal at Heathrow and a puffing of the contrary, that aircraft movements will double too (and indeed the Inspector himself granted this point at the enquiry - I was there and I heard him).

Over a wide area of west London noise from aircraft is already almost intolerable. It is beyond understanding how your leader-writer can characterize the doubling of this pollution (for that is what it is), with all it will mean in suffering for countless thousands of people, as a marginal burden on the environment.

Yours faithfully,
M. H. STATHAM,
13 Fabry House,
Cumberland Road,
Kew,
Richmond,
Surrey,
December 12.

Tarkovsky family

From Mr David Gothard and others

Sir, We write as long-standing admirers of the Russian film director Andrei Tarkovsky and his brilliant films.

As your readers will know, he tried with tact and patience over many years to reach a modus vivendi with the Soviet political and cinema authorities. Gradually he was squeezed out, harassed, ignored and, finally, treated with silent but calculating cruelty. In 20 years he has only been allowed to work at his art for about five. In July he finally felt compelled, against his will, to settle in the West.

Since 1982 he and his wife have, with official permission, lived abroad. But all requests that their 13-year-old son be allowed to join them have met with a stony silence. The unfortunate boy has been living

with an 82-year-old grandmother, growing more and more anxious at his separation from his parents as he enters adolescence.

Our request to Mr Gorbachov, on the occasion of his visit to London, is a simple matter endorsed by the Helsinki Agreement of 1978 that all the members of the Tarkovsky's family who wish to join them should be allowed to do so.

Such a move by the Soviet authorities would be appreciated not only by us but also, we are sure, by our colleagues in the film industry and all lovers of the cinema.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID GOTHARD,
LINDSAY ANDERSON,
RICHARD EYRE,
STEPHEN FREARS,
DAVID PUTTMAN,
NICOLAS ROEG,
JOHN SCHLESINGER,
Riverside Studios,
Crisp Road, W6,
December 20.

NUJ editorship

From Ms Kate Holman

Sir, Contrary to Bernard Levin's unsubstantiated allegations (*The Times*, December 13), there is nothing conspiratorial about the NUI London Freelance Branch's handling of the election for *Journalist* editor.

The branch conducts a mailing to its 3,200 members once a month, containing the LFB circular. The current mailing is the first since the ballot papers became available for distribution. Since, as Mr Levin points out, they do not have to be returned until January 14, giving members almost a month to fill them in, it would have been

irresponsible for the branch to waste £600 of members' money carrying out a special mailing. There has been no "old-boy" network.

It, and no doubt many other NUI members, would be interested to know who Mr Levin's anonymous "advisers" are. For those members of the National Union of Journalists who prefer to have the full story, the two candidates he failed to mention are Bernard Corbett, a humble sub on the revolutionary publication *The Guardian*, and Tim Gopple, who has worked for such rabble-rousing organisations as *The Observer*, LBC and the BBC.

As an NUI member with a belief in democracy I deplore Mr Levin's abuse of his privileged position as a *Times* columnist in order to canvass for the candidature of his choice - a privilege denied to the great majority of union members.

Yours faithfully,
KATE HOLMAN, Chairman,
London Freelance Branch,
National Union of Journalists,
Acorn House,
314-320 Gray's Inn Road, WC1,
December 18.

Just so

From Miss Anne Scott-James

Sir, Mrs Elspeth Huxley (December 14) claims that animals are never cruel, carnivores killing quickly for food and herbivores pursuing a policy of non-interference with others. But it is most unpleasant to see hens pecking the eyes of a sick sister in a hen coop, and a cat clearly has a good time playing with a mouse.

Yours faithfully,
ANNE SCOTT-JAMES,
78 Cheyne Court,
Royal Hospital Road, SW3,
December 12

The 88th Annual General Meeting of the Company will be held at the Hyde Park Hotel, Knightsbridge, London SW1 on Thursday, 21st February 1986 at 12.30 p.m. Copies of the Annual Report and Accounts including the Chairman's Statement will be obtained after 24th January 1986 upon application to the Company Secretary, John Keay House, St. Austell, Cornwall, PL25 4DJ.

STOCK MARKET REPORT

Oil shares under pressure as index falls 12 points

By Pam Spooner and Cliff Feltham

Sterling wiped the Christmas cheer from stock market prices yesterday. The FT 30 share index dropped more than 12 points as it slipped back from a peak of 930.3, and the picture was much the same across a wide selection of areas. The FT-SE 100 index closed 12.4 points lower at 917.9.

The pound hit an all-time low against the American currency early because of the extreme strength of the dollar but mostly because of oil price worries, erasing lost ground against other leading currencies.

The news was enough to bring early hangers to City.

WS International, the insurance broker which came to the market in July, must please its shareholders. Following half-year figures this month, it reported a quadrupled profit of £1.01 million, but buyers have chased shares, and pushed the price to 465, more than double the 20p offering price.

Oil shares took the brunt of the knock-down, with British Petroleum falling 11p to 470p, and Shell 2p to 176p.

Prices were also damaged on the London stock exchange, with as much as 10p taken off Government stocks at one stage. But business gains slack for the gilts, and prices later pulled back some of the losses to close 2 1/2p down.

Among second line equities, shares were generally lower, though items of good news did lift certain stocks.

Intervention Video, originally up by John Bentley and run by June as part of a board take-up by entertainment

impressario, Jarvis Astaire, managed a 1p improvement at 11p. During the day a handful of other shareholders heard of the annual meeting of the "dramatic" slump in video sales leading to the warning of "substantial" losses for 1984 although no accounts have yet been published.

But Mr Astaire was attaching great hopes to the tie-up with CBS/Fox Video leasing cassettes to outlets such as garages, confectionery shops, and off-licences.

According to the chairman there are now nearly 1,000 such outlets paying £1 a week per cassette to Intervention, with benefits - as yet unspecified - due to flow during 1985.

But some shareholders at the meeting, appeared somewhat unconvinced of the new direction, unhappy at the decline in fortunes of the USM company where the shares have fallen from a peak of 60p.

Sweeping boardroom changes at the almost unrecognisable USM "viewdata" equipment group Zyuliyev ("zillicks") sent shares tumbling 8p to 15p. They were launched early this year at 50p.

Out goes managing director Mr Imre Lake and directors Mr John Barton and Mr Peter Kirby, because of "differences over management philosophy."

Mr Barton and Mr Kirby are however carrying on with the company. But the shake-up heralds big changes in share stakes.

Stockbrokers are taking a gloomy view of profit prospects at Bakker International as the company's share price on the London stock exchange is being cut, and yesterday the share price fell 5p to 148p. Some analysts now expect to see no improvement on 1983 profits of £34.1 million, while others hope the successful US businesses can take the strain of United Kingdom coal industry troubles and look for around £36 million against previous City estimates of £42.5 million.

Mr Lake is selling his entire shareholding and Mr Barton a large chunk of his which are being picked up by Tacitus, which represents an educational trust, to give it a 29.9 per cent stake, and the balance, by a

Lichtenstein foundation, Friski, which will hold 26.3 per cent.

Mr Jim O'Hara, one of the Tacitus consultants who steps in as managing director after earlier spells with Bower and BPC, says the Stock Exchange is satisfied there is no tie-up between Tacitus and Friski. "I don't know who they are," he says. He says there is no question of compensation to the departing directors.

Process Systems, the US supplier of computer equipment, made a quiet debut on the London market and closed at its launch price of 92p after staying within a narrow band during the session. A total of

Despite the apparent rash of takeover activity by BAT Industries, stockbrokers are still looking for more share price growth for the tobacco-financial services group. Wood Mackenzie reckons BAT will make profits of £1.225 million this year and £1.320 million next, and adds that, although short-term scope is limited, "We remain strong strategic buyers of the shares for continued long-term re-rating." Yesterday the share price held at 353p.

29.9 per cent of the company was offered for sale.

Dealings also got underway in Kingsley and Forrester, the Manchester textile group which came to the market through a reverse takeover of K and O. Boardman, closed at 62p, the shares reached 67p before closing for a 4p gain at 66p.

Polly Peck was chased 8p higher at 222p ahead of publication today of the report and accounts. Profits have just jumped from £30 million to more than £50 million but still fell short of some City expectations. Chairman Mr Asil Nadir's review of his fruit to packaging and television empire is expected to cast an encouraging light on prospects in the present year and progress in some of its developing businesses.

The company's brokers, L. Messel, has already said they are looking for around £80 million profits this year.

MJI Corporation, formerly Maurice James Industries, the waste disposal to property group, fell 4p to 11p after unveiling a pretax loss at the half time stage of £837,000

compared with a profit the same time before of £501,000. The interim dividend is passed.

Cleaning group Brengreen fell 2 1/2p to 57 1/2p following disclosure that Michael Ashcroft's Hawley Group had cut its shareholding to 11.8 per cent a little over a week after announcing it held a 14.9 per cent stake.

At that time Mr David Evans, the head of Brengreen, welcomed his new shareholder and suggested that "at the right price Evans and Ashcroft would make a formidable team in the cleaning business."

Last night there was no one available at Hawley to say whether, reducing its holding ruled out any possibility of a get-together between the two groups.

Evans and Simé, the Edinburgh-based unit trust and investment fund manager, has reached a new share price peak of 92p, up 6p yesterday. Apart from satisfaction with last month's interim figures, the market is also looking at chances of a takeover bid for the company.

Britannia Arrow got some of the same treatment, the shares jumping 8p to 84p on hopes that a deal has finally been done at the United Kingdom Provident Institution. UKPI has 22.75 per cent of Britannia and has long been rumoured to be in the process of selling the stake to a potential bidder. London & Manchester Assurance also has an 8.5 per cent holding in the unit trust group.

Bestell, the electronics and components maker, stays on the list of stock market bid hopefuls. The shares rose another 14p to 323p as speculation demand continues. Mr John Dowling, who was in charge at Henlys, the garage group, until the successful bid from Hawley Group and British Car Auctions, has moved into the chief executive position at Bestobell.

Plagued GrandMet drops 25p

According to the market, it was hard to find anything attractive at all to say about Grand Metropolitan's full-year figures yesterday. Against original estimates of £370 million, the group struggled to generate £334 million, up just 13 per cent on the previous year. The shares fell 25p to 303p, thereby endorsing the last 12 months' chronic underperformance.

Some of the group's difficulties stem from the cigarette division. GrandMet's push to build up the generic cigarette business in the US was so successful that by mid-summer, the Liggett & Myers subsidiary was making about £50 million, more or less from scratch.

A mooted management buyout, worth some \$325 million was then scuppered by the aggressive entry into the market of an underdog tobacco major, BAT. The putative buyers withdrew as BAT's price war drove the GrandMet cigarette profits down to nominal levels.

Little relief, either for the cigarette division, or for Grand Metropolitan's gearing, can be expected from this quarter in the short term. Borrowings are still 54 per cent of equity.

But problems abound elsewhere. Consumers services profits fell some £6 million to £67.4 million, as the gaming side was hit by new and relocated casino competition throughout London.

Trading profits on foods effectively halved to £16.4 million, as milk overproduction led to cheese margins which helped to slash margins. Brewing profits, it is true, improved by some 10 per cent, reflecting the group's brand strength and efficiency drive. But the improvement ranks nowhere near the 25 per cent profit advance by Bass.

In one sense, the vulnerability of Grand Metropolitan, when faced with a really determined major, like BAT, exemplifies a common problem. In the seventies, the group used gearing to move smartly into high cash flow but sleepy consumer sectors. But the sector majors have subsequently regrouped. Grand Metropolitan, however, is just too small in all areas to be a price maker. Meanwhile it is left with the debt to service - which must constrain its natural innovative talents - and the problem, perhaps, of a rather dated identity.

In the long term the initial acquisition must be a good move for BET and investors must be patient about the earnings dilution.

In the first half, publishing profits leapt to £8.5 million from £1.9 million although 24 million of the increase came from property sales and acquisitions.

The shares have been related to reflect the improvement in BET's structure and strategy. Yesterday the price fell by 7p to 303p and it may well be that in the short-term there will not be much by way of growth.

On a longer term view another upward rating can be expected providing BET provides some earnings growth.

M&G Group experienced one of the best investment years in its history in 1984 and increased its revenue from management charges, producing another good set of results. Pretax profits for the year to September 30 moved ahead 18 per cent from £6 million to £7.1 million compared with last year's 33 per cent surge. The company is giving shareholders a 25 per cent dividend increase, to 25p, which compares well with last year's exceptional one-third rise.

At the same time the group is seeking shareholders' approval to double the number of shares by capitalizing reserves, producing a share capital of £4.6 million. The object is to make the shares, currently at 70p, more marketable, but it will not disturb the major shareholdings principally Kleinwort Benson's 32 per cent stake.

M&G's share capital and reserves rose from £20 million to £25.2 million over the year. £1.3 million of tax provisions was written back into reserves as a result of corporation tax changes. The group saw a net increase of £300 million in units sold, to

a total of £1.5 billion in its unit trusts. Its investment trust and pensions business also drew in new funds, but most impressive was the virtual doubling of M&G's single-premium life assurance business from £28.9 million to £43.3 million.

Shareholders can feel justifiably satisfied with earnings per share up 10p to 50.38p and net assets per share up from 218.7p to 272.9p.

English China Clays, as ever, poses the market a subtle rating problem, after reporting profits 37 per cent ahead at nearly £64 million. The shares rose 2p on the results to 258p.

The group, a leading supplier to the world's paper industry, has done well out of the consumer boom of the last 18 months. Volumes in the clay division rose by about 43 per cent to £45.8 million, with only marginal benefits from price rises.

Sadly, however, the Chancellor appears to have done rather better than shareholders from the bumper year. Changes in stock relief and Britain's capital allowances structure have boosted its tax charges by about 70 per cent. A £24 million provision for deferred tax has been charged directly to reserves, pushing earnings, on one calculation, up about seven percent points to 29 per cent.

The dividend, in contrast, goes up by just under 10 per cent to 9.0p, a far slower rate of increase than the present industrial norm.

English China Clays' accelerating market underperformance may therefore stem from bearish perceptions about the world industrial cycle, or from frustration at the dividend policy. But the rating certainly excludes perennial bid hopes against which the group considers it has new developed immunity. Lord Hanson, RTZ, et al. may feel otherwise.

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ITV defends its future as Treasury eyes revenue

By Jeremy Warner

Since Lord Thomson made famous remark in the early 80s of the independent network about television being a nice to print money, the industry has been trying to persuade the public, politicians and civil servants alike, that it is

at the moment, its protectors louder than ever. Early in the new year the Government is to decide, after a five-month joint Home Office and Treasury review in consultation with the Independent Broadcasting Authority, how to get the exchequer levy on television company profits.

The fear is that it will be reduced in such a way as to reduce the incentive for television programming and ruin the profits which the independent franchise holders are facing enhanced competition on the air waves and asked to make a huge investment in the risky future of broadcasting by satellite.

DBS, the worst of the Government do, according to the Treasury, is to switch the basis of the levy from profits to revenue. That is what the Treasury who some fear hold the hand on the review, want.

Government has said whatever happens, the effect of the changes will be neutral. In other words, the £50 million or so the Treasury expects to raise this year under the present 67 per cent of profits allowable expenditures "free profits slice" of 100 or 2.8 per cent of whichever is the greater, will be raised by taxing advertising revenue of £100 million at the rate of 5 per cent, a revenue basis were.

It is easy to see the attractions of a system for the Government. Despite some fall in the past couple of months, advertising revenue has grown, and at a rate that far outstrips inflation. In 1981 it was 15.5 per cent higher than in 1980. The year it grew by 14.1 per cent in 1983, by 17.5 per cent this year it is going up by 14 and 15 per cent.

On the other hand the take the exchequer levy has not risen dramatically. Having a peak of £57 million in March 1982 it fell to £40 million in 1983 and £23 million in 1984 as Channel 4, which began its operations in 1984, began to

there is a yet more recent reason for changing the basis of the levy from profits to

revenue. Treasury ministers believe the present levy mechanism encourages inefficiency, overmanning, excessive wages and management weakness in the face of union power. A revenue tax would force management to look more to their cost structures.

This is an accusation vigorously denied by the industry. In a submission to the review group, the Independent Television Companies Association (ITCA) said: "The product we sell, advertising time, is particularly vulnerable to industrial action and unsold advertising time is even more perishable than unsold fruit. We maintain that our efforts in meeting industrial pressures have been at least as successful as others in similar situations."

Moreover, though there is little doubt that independent television inherited some of the worst excesses of the old British film industry, recent events have indicated a new "get tough" attitude in management.

Thames, often criticized as one of the industry's worst offenders, countered what its managing director Mr Bryan Cowgill, called the "tyranny of the blank screen" during a two-and-a-half week technicians stoppage in the autumn, with a service put out by management and did not suffer too badly in the ratings as a result.

A tax based on revenue could have severe consequences for the already highly volatile nature of television profits. The profit margins of independent television companies, frequently in excess of 20 per cent before the introduction of Channel 4, are now running at little more than half that level. If the levy became a fixed cost, it would not require much inflation elsewhere to wipe out profits altogether.

Last Tuesday the ITCA met in plenary session with the BBC and five independents to discuss the present proposals for direct broadcasting by satellite. The 15 ITV companies are being asked to put up £200 million towards the project which envisages a three-satellite system operated jointly with the BBC and the five commercial companies.

There are loud mutterings that the whole scheme is not financially viable and significant changes were expected to be proposed at the meeting. Yorkshire Television's managing director, Mr Paul Fox says: "Thinking with the levy system will certainly threaten the entire future of DBS."

Mr John Gattward, managing director of Television South, one of the newcomers to the network, is stronger still. "The

future of DBS hinges on a combination of the BBC licence fee and levy review decisions. This is a highly successful industry with a unique regional presence. It should be encouraged - not taxed out of existence."

The most powerful argument the network has put forward in favour of the status quo is that a change to a revenue-based tax would threaten the future of creative programme making and the range and quality of programming on ITV.

The present system, by making programme costs offsettable against levy but any money earned by selling the product overseas not chargeable for levy purposes, has created a powerful incentive for producing quality material for the network and helped make Britain into the second largest exporter of programmes in the world after the United States.

"Much of the work we have put into developing our production capacity over the last 12 years will be lost if there is significant change to the present levy system," says Mr Tim Knowles, finance director of ITV.

"Because of the high marginal rate of tax on profits, we have become a highly competitive industry in export markets and have been able to break into the States in a big way. We have created employment, opportunities and expertise in the regions, helped improve the standard of programme on the network and contributed overseas earnings. They surely do not want to kill such success."

Indeed, the Government does not and the present guess is that the review committee will try to come up with a new tax based on both profits and revenue which will attempt to combine the old alternatives for high-quality programming with the need to take a close look at other costs in ITV.

The industry does not regard this as an acceptable compromise. One senior ITV manager said: "Profitability and efficiency is not a matter for the Government. It is something that independent television company shareholders are quite capable of looking after. There is a growing feeling that just because the Government is going to clobber the BBC, they will clobber us as well."

The futures of the two are no doubt linked, but that is because - broadcasting is a national asset and ITV, for all its shareholders, is part of the duopoly that controls it. Efficiency within broadcasting as a whole, not just the BBC is a legitimate area of the Government's concern.

Service record.

The level of service given to our customers is reflected in improved service to our shareholders. Industrial action at Thames TV and reduced profitability in some of our electronics companies held us back from an exceptional performance all round, but our results demonstrate growth in line with our business strategy.

Poor performers have already been removed, in favour of investing further in companies with greater potential in our chosen service sectors.

Our recent acquisitions in the USA are now contributing to greater geographic balance, and dynamic companies across the world have continued to join us since the end of the half year.

SERVICE RECORD

Half Year to September 30, 1984

Turnover	£554.3 million	Down 9%
Pre-tax Profit	£37.2 million	Up 17%
Earnings per Share	11.2p	Up 8.7%
Dividend	2.75p	Up 22%

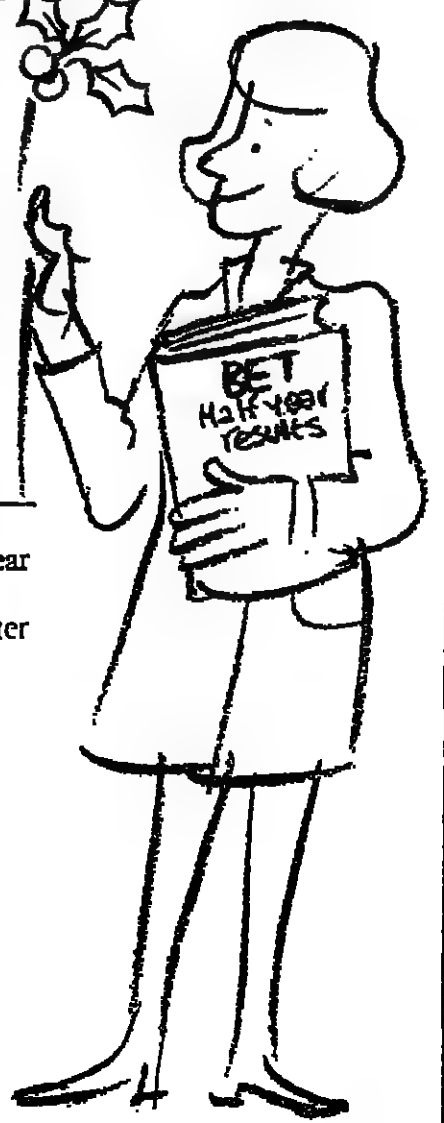
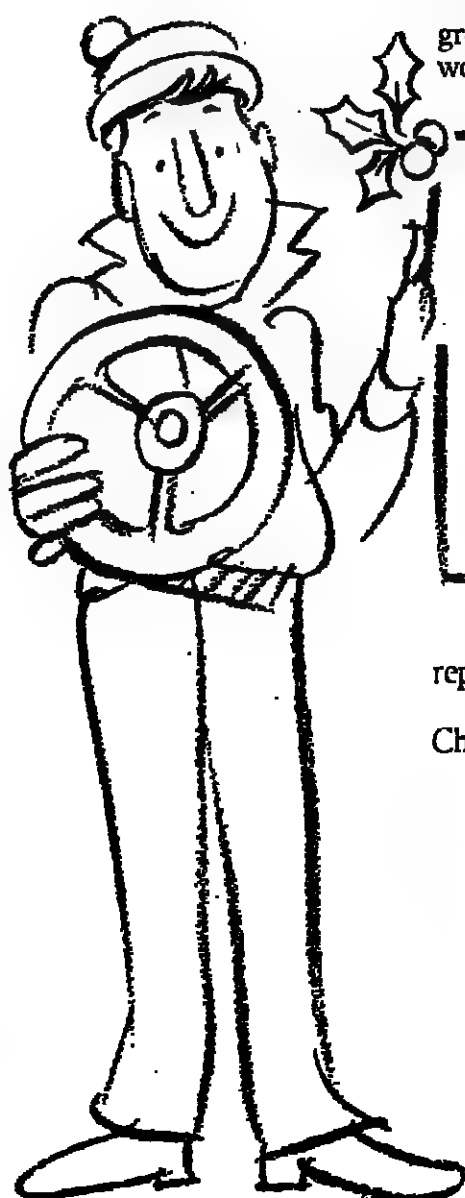
Details of our interim service record are in our half year report. Please let us know if you would like a copy.

In the meantime, 50,000 of us are working for an even better Christmas present for our shareholders next year.

BET

putting experience to good service

If you would like a copy of our half year results, please write to: Neil Ryder, BET PLC, Stratton House, Piccadilly, London W1X 6AS



THE TIMES Portfolio

From your Portfolio card check your eight share price movements. Add them up to give you your overall total. Check this against the daily dividend figure published on this page.

If it matches you have won outright or a share of the total daily prize money stated. If you are a winner follow the claim procedure on the back of your card.

STOCK EXCHANGE PRICES

Equities lower

ACCOUNT DAYS: Dealings Began, Dec 10. Dealings End, Today. Contango Day, Dec 24. Settlement Day, Jan 7.

Forward bargains are permitted on two previous days.

THE TIMES Portfolio

© Times Newspapers Limited

DAILY DIVIDEND

£2,000

Claims required for

+21 points

Claimants should ring 0254-53272

By Mich

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A golden decade

Boom and bust points to a greater realism

By Michael Prest

Gold is still real money but the worldwide ebbing of inflation has made it more like a commodity

Only with the infinite wisdom of 20-20 hindsight can any gold trader claim to have anticipated the great bull market of the latter half of the 1970s. Mr Keith Smith of Mocatta & Goldsmid, one of the five leading bullion houses which constitute the London Gold Market, says flatly: "I did not expect gold to go to \$850." Still less did anyone foresee the reaction which set in after 1980.

But the boom, which carried the price up relentlessly from an average of \$125 an ounce in 1976 to an average of \$612 in 1979 and a peak of \$850 four years later - was the central act in the drama played out by the gold market over the decade after liberalization in 1974.

Public awareness of gold in all its manifestations became acute to the point of obsession. Far from being the Cinderella metal of the 1960s, gold was widely regarded as the thermometer of the financial system.

Its rise and fall closely track the dominant themes of the time: the accumulation and abatement of inflationary fears; floating currencies and the roller-coaster fortunes of the dollar; the search for investment havens; and even doubts about the very survival of the Western economy.

The consequences of the late 1970s are still with us and may have changed the market permanently. Gold is quoted daily by newspapers and wire services as a key economic indicator. The idea that gold should form part of a portfolio is commonplace, despite its recent dismal performance.

Nor is private hands and many are dealers are active in the

market. And paradoxically, what then seemed to be a decisive argument for the restoration of gold in the monetary system - if not a gold standard - has turned out to be a case at least as strong for paper instruments.

The collapse of the gold price from 1975 to mid-1976 seemed an inauspicious start.

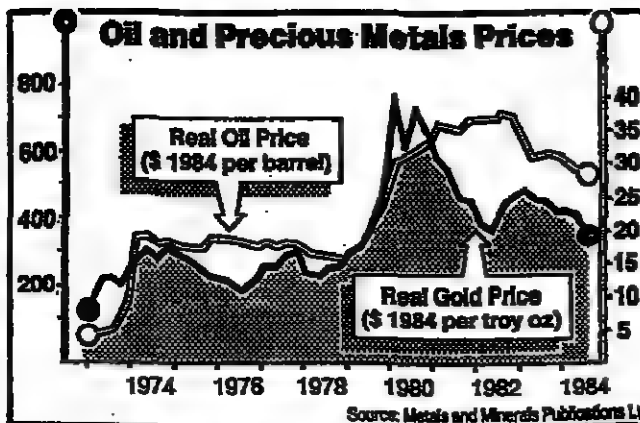
The impact of liberalization in America was seriously overestimated, Mr Robert Beale of Samuel Montagu, another of the London bullion houses, recalls. "The point about United States ownership of gold was that it didn't develop in the way people expected." In the event, both trading on Comex and bullion and coin purchases started slowly.

The disappointment was temporary. By the middle of 1976 all the forces which were to fuel gold's upward flight had assembled. Then and now the most important of these forces in the eyes of many participants and observers was inflation. Mr Reg Eccles of Metals and Minerals, a British consultancy, believes: "What the last 10 years has been about is wealth protection."

On the face of it, the evidence that people flocked into gold as a hedge against inflation is compelling. In Britain, the Retail Price Index rose from 127 in 1976 to 200.9 at the height of the gold boom in 1980, when British inflation was running at an annual rate of more than 20 per cent.

Average inflation among the members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the rich countries' club, was 8.6 per cent in 1976 and 12.9 per cent four years later.

Rapid inflation was outside the American experience and resurrected in the European collective consciousness dark memories of Weimar. As Mr Julian Baring, a partner with the London stockbrokers, James Capel, put it: "Gold is the ultimate money. Man has used it for centuries." The instinct to



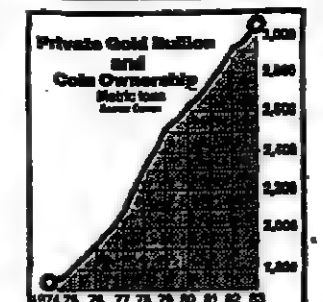
turn to gold as a safe harbour against the threatened inflationary hurricane ran deep. Fear bred its own convictions. The idea that gold by some ineluctable process held its real value was much aired. By the height of the boom in 1979 and 1980, the idea had gained a semblance of credibility as nobody could fail - or so it seemed - to make quick, short-term profits.

In the bullion belt of America's south and west, billionaires believed in a quasi-religious way that Communism and hyper-inflation were nigh. From Puerto Rico the mysterious Aden sisters forecast that gold would reach \$2,000. A few believed them.

Mr Lowell Mintz, at this stage chairman of Comex, vividly recalls the atmosphere which infected the professional and the unprofessional: "You had world-wide crazies, and by the same token you had some so-called experienced crazies."

The inflationary impetus behind gold was not entirely irrational. It was inevitable that a commodity whose price had been artificially restrained for so long should jump in value once freed of administrative constraints. And it was just as natural that gold should have been carried up with the general price increase. Other commodities behaved similarly and there was also an international boom in property.

Much the most persuasive analogy was with oil: there was an uncanny common price



behaviour between gold and oil. What was not forecast then, except in the most general terms, was that oil and gold would subsequently decline in real terms as well.

Oil was impelled by the same price liberation and commodity response to supply and demand. It was important for another reason. Part of the buying spree which began to push gold up from 1976 on emanated from the Middle East. The quadrupling of the oil price had flooded Arabia and Gulf with surplus dollars and Arabs were long accustomed to gold as money.

Mr Baring and Mr Smith place great emphasis on the impact of oil prices, not just in terms of the liquidity transfer, but also in terms of the change in Western psychology. Mr Baring recalls: "You only had to see them going in and out of the Swiss banks. They all wore white robes." Not for nothing was oil called black gold.

Arabs were not the only people with money to spare. The reaction of most industrial

governments to the first oil shock was to print more money. Indeed, the course of money supply in the developed world might be a better analogy of gold prices than the inflation which the bigger quantity of money was supposed to cause. In any event, one result was that fast depreciating cash found its way into gold.

The clearest early example was Britain, a country whose long history of political stability and secure property ownership apparently militated against gold. But in 1974, in the aftermath of a stock market crash which took the FT Index down to 150, the British began buying Kruggerands insistently. Eventually, the Government was forced to impose import controls, but a succession of smuggling cases and value-added tax frauds pointed to a continuing interest in the coins.

The British bought Kruggerands because the coins were technically South African legal tender - otherwise the British were not allowed to hoard gold.

Other countries were not slow to buy Kruggerands, as they quickly came to be known, whether legally or illegally. Between 1970 and 1980, investors around the world bought more than 30 million ounces of the coins. Their convenience as portable wealth and the relatively low premiums compared with the many small bars which appeared on the market, allied to the low unit cost, helped to create a huge new private pool of gold holding, with immense long-term consequences for the market.

Mr Mark Collier, the London representative of InterGold, the South African marketers of Kruggerands, says: "It's been a major international success story in terms of the billions of dollars invested in gold." Apart from Britain, the main markets were Germany, Luxembourg, Switzerland, recently Hong Kong where the coins have begun to replace the traditional gold bar - and the United States. When Americans finally caught gold fever, from 1977 on, they were very ill indeed. The United States is now by far the biggest market for gold in all its forms: bullion, coins and jewelry. What excited the interest was European trading of gold futures in Comex. As the gold price and the volume of bullion flowing into private hands rose, Europeans turned to Comex as the only futures hedge. It was a reversal of the tradition by which Europeans hoarded and Americans traded.

Trading volume on Comex picked up sharply as Americans saw the market's potential. Mr Mintz admits of Comex: "It went through quite a violent infancy. People weren't used to trading gold in this kind of environment."

As gold raced towards \$850 on January 21, 1980, it was watched by officialdom with bemused disapproval. Throughout this period, the US Treasury and the International Monetary Fund were selling gold in an attempt to cool the market.

While the private sector was busy re-asserting its faith in the metal, the official sector was trying to de-mystify gold once and for all. The policy was partly based on Keynes' dictum that gold was a "barbarous relic". The authorities wanted the world to switch to the incomprehensible Special Drawing Right.

Mr Beale has an heretic interpretation of this episode. "I think that what made the popularity of gold in the late 1970s and the future markets going was IMF and Treasury auctions." Far from deepening demand, the extra supply fed it. It is significant that Western gold mine production fell in the mid-1970s to its lowest for 20 years.

Even the fastest stomach fills up and by January, 1980, despite the queues in Hutton Garden and the run on jewellers, the game was almost up.

Within two years of touching \$850, gold had collapsed to barely \$350 an ounce. The brief-spurt back up to \$500 at the beginning of 1983 proved a false dawn. Gold is now so much out of favour with investors that there is gloomy talk of it falling far below \$300.

Disenchantment, or perhaps greater detachment, is common. Mr Baring describes the market of the late 1970s as a "bandwagon". Mr Smith says it was fashion. Gold has no God-given right to be considered a hedge against inflation. It is just another hedge available to the fund manager. Big American commission houses such as

Merrill Lynch, banks like Citibank and traders like Philip Brothers who plunged into gold trading have cut back their operations.

In some respects the market feels much as it did a decade ago. A low price means strong demand for jewelry and for other manufacturing such as electronics, but the absence of investment demand depresses the price further. Gold once again is behaving more like a commodity. The alternation between commodity and investment characteristics is another of the period's sub-plots. Mine production is rising quickly, a lagged response to events five years ago.

But as the dust settles, one can see some possibly permanent changes to the landscape. It is very hard to envisage much of the 2,600 tonnes of gold absorbed by the private sector drifting back into official hands. The "de-monetization" of gold is impossible, but by the same token, as Miss Louise de Baulay of Consolidated Gold Fields points out, the increased availability of gold renders the market less stable.

The second big change wrought by the 1970s is faster, more accurate and more public pricing. Futures markets, new technology and the public awareness of a global market place have swept away the

private business of the 1960s. This, too, implies more volatile markets, regardless of the influence one attributes to futures trading.

What is striking is a paradox. The Vietnamese boat people, among others, proved that gold has lost none of its attractions for the politically fearful. Yet the obverse of the gold boom and inflation was the appearance of a new generation of financial instruments, such as interest-bearing accounts aimed at the private investor.

Gold has re-asserted itself, but the most enduring legacy may be the much greater sophistication of the investor and the instruments he chooses.

Distillers

Unaudited report of the Group results for the half year ended 30th September 1984

The Board has today declared an interim dividend for the year ending 31st March 1985 at the rate of 4.5p per share (last year 4.5p) absorbing £16.3m. The dividend is payable on 22nd February 1985 to shareholders on the register at 18th January 1985.

	1984	1983
Results based on historical cost	£m	£m
TURNOVER (note 2)	554.5	493.0
TRADING PROFIT	79.5	64.2
Share of profit (loss) of related company	3	(2.0)
Income from investments	5.6	4.7
Interest (note 3)	(7.1)	1.0
Surplus on realisation of investments	2.2	-
PROFIT ON ORDINARY ACTIVITIES BEFORE TAXATION	80.5	67.9
Taxation (note 4)	(35.3)	(23.6)
PROFIT ON ORDINARY ACTIVITIES AFTER TAXATION	45.2	44.3
Extraordinary items (note 5)	(4.4)	(1.4)
PROFIT FOR THE PERIOD	40.8	42.9
EARNINGS PER SHARE	12.45p	12.20p

Notes

1. Comparative figures

The figures for 1983 have been restated to reflect the treatment of rationalisation, redundancy and closure costs adopted in the accounts for the year ended 31st March 1984.

2. Turnover

	£m	£m
Sales excluding duty - United Kingdom	125.5	120.1
- Other markets	274.9	233.4
Duty	154.1	139.5
	554.5	493.0

3. Interest

	£m	£m
Interest payable	(14.7)	(5.6)
Interest earned on liquid funds	7.6	6.6
	(7.1)	1.0

4. Taxation

UK corporation tax has been calculated at 45%. The charge for the comparable period last year was reduced by £8.5 million on account of stock relief.

5. Extraordinary items

	£m	£m
Rationalisation, redundancy and closure costs less attributable taxation	(8.3)	(3.0)
	3.9	1.6
	(4.4)	(1.4)

Current cost accounting information

	£m	£m
Trading profit per historical cost accounts	79.5	64.2
Depreciation adjustment	(16.1)	(17.0)
Cost of sales adjustment	(16.2)	(15.5)
Monetary working capital adjustment	(1.6)	(1.5)

CURRENT COST OPERATING PROFIT

	£m	£m
Share of loss of related company	(1.2)	(4.2)
Income from investments	5.6	4.7
Interest	(7.1)	1.0

CURRENT COST PROFIT BEFORE TAXATION

	£m	£m
Taxation	(35.3)	(23.6)
Current cost profit after taxation	7.6	8.1
Gearing adjustment	3.7	8

CURRENT COST PROFIT (BEFORE EXTRAORDINARY ITEMS) ATTRIBUTABLE TO SHAREHOLDERS

	£m	£m
	11.3	8.9

CURRENT COST EARNINGS PER SHARE

	£m	£m
	3.11p	2.45p

Review of Trading

Although industrial action in the UK caused some orders which would have been despatched in September to be held back until after the end of the period, Group exports of Scotch whisky matched the volume recorded for the corresponding period last year and exports of gin achieved a marginal increase. The volume of sales in the home market fell short of last year's level.

The increase in trading profit as against the 1983 figure reflects the inclusion of £10 million from the US company Somerset Importers Ltd. which we acquired in May and also some £8 million attributable to the higher exchange value of the dollar currency in which we invoice our exports to the US of whiskies bottled in Scotland and Tanqueray gin. Trading profit of more than £8 million relating to the export shipments delayed by industrial action has been postponed to the second half of the year.

Our carbon dioxide interests achieved a modest improvement in trading profit but the contribution from our food group was substantially lower.

The enormous increase in the taxation charge compared with last year is due to the abrupt withdrawal of stock relief. The consequences of the denial of any transitional relief in respect of stocks of maturing Scotch whisky were described in the Chairman's statement in our 1984 annual report.

Outlook

Our leading brands in the United States - Dewar's and Johnnie Walker - continue to show satisfactory strength, but there has been a further weakening in demand for Scotch whisky in Venezuela, Japan and the Middle East in the last few months and we now consider it unlikely that the volume of our total exports of Scotch whisky will quite reach last year's level.

In the home market in the face of intense competition and flat consumer demand, we do not now anticipate achieving last year's sales volume.

The strong performance of Tanqueray gin in the US is continuing and world-wide exports of our brands of gin are showing a satisfactory increase over last year.

The benefits of rationalisation measures recently taken, together with the continuing strength of the dollar, the contribution from Somerset Importers and the greatly improved performance of United Glass, strengthen our view that pre-tax profits for the full year will show at least a moderate improvement over 1983/84.

The Distillers Company plc

This advertisement is issued in compliance with the requirements of the Council of The Stock Exchange. It does not constitute an invitation to the public to subscribe for or purchase any shares.



Great American First Savings Bank

(Incorporated with limited liability in the State of California in the United States of America)

Authorised

100,000,000 Shares of Common Stock of U.S. \$1.00 par value

Issued and reserved

for issue as of

6th December, 1984

13,750,000

*including 1,250,000 shares reserved for issue

Great American First Savings Bank (the "Company" or "Great American"), which was originally founded in 1885, is primarily engaged in savings and loan activities conducting its business through a network of 117 branch offices in California and 15 loan origination offices in California, Arizona, Denver, Colorado and Oregon. Great American has recently expanded its commercial lending and has developed new products and services to compete as a retail financial service centre.

The Company had consolidated total assets of US\$4,897 million and shareholders' equity of US\$326 million at 31st December, 1983; net income for the year ending 31st December, 1983 was US\$28.4 million.

The Council of The Stock Exchange has admitted to the Official List all the 13,750,000 Shares of Common Stock of the Company issued and reserved for issue.

Particulars relating to the Company are available in the Extel Statistical Service and copies of such particulars may be obtained during usual business hours on any weekday (Saturdays and public holidays excepted) up to and including 11th January, 1985 from:

Credit Suisse First Boston Limited

22 Bishopsgate, London EC2N 4BQ

Cazenove & Co.

12, Tokenhouse Yard,

London EC2R 7AN

21st December, 1984

This advertisement is issued in compliance with the requirements of the Council of The Stock Exchange. It does not constitute an invitation to the public to subscribe for or purchase any shares.

MARTIN MARIETTA

MARTIN MARIETTA CORPORATION

(Incorporated with limited liability under the laws of the State of Maryland, United States of America)

Authorised

100,000,000 Common Stock of U.S. \$1.00 par value

73,191,417

*including 34,161,082 shares held in Treasury

Martin Marietta Corporation, headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland, is an aerospace and technology company. Martin Marietta designs, manufactures and manages systems and products in the fields of space, defence, electronics, communications, information management, energy and materials. Over the past five years, aerospace revenues of the Corporation have grown at an average rate of 23% per year and the backlog of new orders has increased from approximately U.S. \$800,000,000 to approximately U.S. \$5,600,000,000. In 1983, Martin Marietta had net sales of U.S. \$3,899,258,000 and net earnings of U.S. \$141,331,000. The Corporation currently employs more than 60,000 people, primarily in the United States, and it has operations in 17 other countries.

Application has been made to the Council of The Stock Exchange for admission to the Official List of all the 73,191,417 shares of issued, and reserved for issue, Common Stock of Martin Marietta Corporation, including 34,161,082 shares held in Treasury.

Particulars relating to Martin Marietta are available in the Extel Statistical Service and copies of such particulars, together with copies of the latest audited Financial Statements, may be obtained during usual business hours on any weekday (Saturdays and public holidays excepted) up to and including 7th January, 1985 from:

Goldman Sachs International Corp.,

162 Queen Victoria Street,

London EC4V 4DB

Phillips & Drew,

120 Moorgate,

London EC2M 6XP

21st December, 1984

Base Lending Rates

ABN Bank	9 1/2%
Admiral & Company	9 1/2%
Barrat	9 1/2%
BCCI	9 1/2%
Citibank Savings	10 1/2%
Consolidated Credit	9 1/2%
Continental Trust	9 1/2%
C. Hoare & Co.	9 1/2%
Deutsche Bank	9 1/2%
Midland Bank	9 1/2%
Nat Westminster	9 1/2%
TSB	9 1/2%
Williams & Glyn's	9 1/2%
Citibank NA	9 1/2%

* Mortgage Rate 10 1/2%

* 7 day deposits on sums of under £10,000, 6% to £10,000 up to £50,000, 7 1/2% to £50,000 and over, 8%.

مكتبة المصلح

Cricket: Somerset spin cooks the Indian goose and enables England to quicken their run-up to Christmas in a foreign land

Marksmanship of highest order triggers collapse

Gauti (Press Association) - Marks produced his best bowling performance on tour in India to set England up for a victory over East Zone. The Somerset off spinner took four wickets in the space of balls, at a cost of only eight runs, to send East Zone tumbling to 117 all out. They were reduced to 173 behind England's 290.

When dusk closed the second day seven minutes early, East were one wicket down. On turning pitch it is difficult to see the ball, and it is a matter of days' play to avoid a defeat.

England's first innings

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batting		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
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England's second innings

16-53, 7-95, 8-108, 8-112 10-117.	
LINE: Foster, 10-4-14-1; Cowans, 9-2-18- diamonds, 33-19-25-2; Marks, 29-11-48-4; ng, 4-1-4-1.	
Second Innings	
bat, not out _____	1
not out _____	0
Total (no wk) _____	1
LINE: Foster, 1-0-1-0; Cowans, 1-1-0-0. ste and widee dobled to bowlers.	

England's third innings

ket partnership between the
ner Indian Test opener,
in Lal (42), and Ashjit
asprakash (16) was begin-
g to frustrate the visitors.
n seven previous weeks on
four-Marks has claimed only
wickets at a cost of 239 runs
n 84 overs. Yesterday he

England's fourth innings

ndians seek 1

elhi (Reuter). — The Indian
ket Board has summoned Smit
askar, the captain, and Kapil
the former captain, for a
ting in an attempt to diffuse the
which is threatening the unity of
real team.

England's fifth innings

December 22 has been postponed three days to allow all the stores to be present. It will now place in Nagpur on Christmas in the presence of all five Test stars.

The disagreement broke out after this week when Kapil Dev, has made 66 consecutive Test appearances, was dropped from the Indian team for the first time.

England's sixth innings

KELSO
 NG: soft (hurdles); good to soft (chas
5 CHARTERHALL JUVENILE
 URDLE (3-y-o: £642; 2m) 16 runner
 6401 MENNICH (d) N Tinker 11-5
 M'URRANGHOCH HOUSE R Fisher 10-10
 HALF BIAFF W A Stephenson 10-10 ..
 00 MAGNOX N Chambers 10-10
 800 BOWMAN N Tinker 10-10

England's seventh innings

50	SPECIAL SETTLEMENT R Asian 10-10	
	STAN'S POLLY B Payne 10-10	was awarded
4	TAELOS A Booz 10-10	was awarded
0100	TOP OF THE CREAM R Gray 10-10	
0100	UNCLE OLIVER (D) V Thompson 10-10	
0	JADA J Parnes 10-5	was awarded
0	LUCKY LOCKER R Lambert 10-5	
422	MISS GOLDENRAY (R) M W Eastern	
0	WINTER BONNET B McLean 10-5	was awarded
1983: No corresponding meeting.		

England's eighth innings

E. ROEBING (10-0) 1st winner from Bohemond
 1581, sold, Nov 24, 5 ran, with SPECIAL SETTL
 3rd. TAELOS (11-0) 23d 4th of 20 to Diansu
 1000 hls. 2788, good. Dec 10 to "UNCL
 MISS GOLDINGAY (10-0) 2d to Mohamud (1
 1581 (10-7) 33 away 6th and TOP of THE C
 1000 hls. 2548, good. Dec 8, 21 ran,
 1000 hls. MISS GOLDINGAY.

Kelso selections

By Mandarin

England's ninth innings

batting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
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WEDDINGS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS AND FUNERALS

Announcements authorized by the bride and groom, or the family, may be sent to the Editor, The Times, 1, Abchurch Lane, London EC4N 3DF. They should be sent to the Editor, The Times, 1, Abchurch Lane, London EC4N 3DF. They should be sent to the Editor, The Times, 1, Abchurch Lane, London EC4N 3DF.

BIRTHS

ADAMS - On December 16th to Catherine and James, a son, James Alexander Adams.

BOYD - On December 16th to Mrs. John Boyd and Mr. John Boyd, a son, John Boyd.

COLLIER - On December 16th to Mrs. John Collier and Mr. John Collier, a son, John Collier.

FLANNERY - On December 17th to Mrs. John Flannery and Mr. John Flannery, a son, John Flannery.

GORE - On December 17th to Mrs. John Gore and Mr. John Gore, a son, John Gore.

KIRKWOOD - On December 17th to Mrs. John Kirkwood and Mr. John Kirkwood, a son, John Kirkwood.

MILES - On December 17th to Mrs. John Miles and Mr. John Miles, a son, John Miles.

PHILLIPS - On December 17th to Mrs. John Phillips and Mr. John Phillips, a son, John Phillips.

PROCTOR - On December 17th to Mrs. John Proctor and Mr. John Proctor, a son, John Proctor.

RILEY - On December 17th to Mrs. John Riley and Mr. John Riley, a son, John Riley.

TULLOCH - On December 17th to Mrs. John Tulloch and Mr. John Tulloch, a son, John Tulloch.

WEAVER - On December 17th to Mrs. John Weaver and Mr. John Weaver, a son, John Weaver.

WILLIAMS - On December 17th to Mrs. John Williams and Mr. John Williams, a son, John Williams.

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